

King resisted arrest and became a celebrity. As all the media have told us, he's a great guy. Just don't touch his tape deck.

**Segregation Is OK**

The modern rule is that white institutions must be integrated and black institutions segregated. For example, Clarence Thomas, great conservative jurist, recently helped order Mississippi to lower its "historically white" universities' admission requirements to make sure they have more black students. However, said Clarence, Mississippi and other states should also maintain, and fund at a higher level, their "historically black" colleges, whose "distinctive histories and traditions" he praised as "a symbol of the highest attainment of black culture."

**Chinese Rage?**

Not too long ago, Chinese-Americans held a commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the beating of Vincent Chin. Chin, was beaten to death in Detroit by two unemployed autoworkers. They thought Chin was Japanese, and therefore, of course, responsible for their unemployment. The two UAW thugs were convicted, but sentenced only to probation and a fine.

"The Asians were furious

when this happened," writes a friend. "But did they express their rage by looting and burning Chinatown? No, of course; they marked the occasion by working 80 hours a week, etc., like the noble Korean grocers attacked in the L.A. riots."

**Poor Little Us**

Nowadays, I can hear the victimological whine of the average newspaper even before I open it up. On a recent Sunday, the *Albany (Ga.) Herald* said about the very successful Parks Sausage Company, "in the early 50s, bigoted grocers put the fledgling black-owned company's products on back shelves to spoil."

Poor millionaires! In fact, grocery stores always reserve the front for the best-selling products. Kellogg's Raisin Bran gets a better spot than Joe's Raisin Delite. All "fledgling" companies—black, white, yellow—get the back seat on the retail bus. Why? Because that's the

way customers want it. When we shop, we look for our favorite brands and we want to be able to find them easily. Now that Parks is one of those favorite brands, it gets top placement.

Just once, I'd like to see a non-victimological newspaper. I expect it when Parks' sausages fly. ■

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**Mr. First Nighter**

by M.N.R.

**The Player**

Heralded and beloved by the Left as Robert Altman's "come-back" movie, this "satire" on Hollywood is both unfunny and meretricious. Supposedly a critique of Hollywood's commercialism from the standpoint of pure art, it actually panders shamelessly to the mob's love of celebrity by one of the oldest tricks in the book: quick, little cameo shots at Hollywood "in" locations, leading people in the audience to nudge their escorts and whisper: "Ooohh, isn't that \_\_\_\_\_?" throughout the movie. Also, the "good guys" keep making references to pure, avant-garde films of the past, which are allegedly being betrayed in today's Hollywood. But when you get right down to it, this "betrayal" of purity comes down to happy endings, which are still stubbornly and apparently inexplicably favored by the dumb bourgeoisie.

This movie led me to ruminate about the tremendous cultural decline from the quasi-Commie Old Left of the good old days of cinema to the nihilistic New Left of today. Such great Old Left movies, for example, as *Casablanca* may have pushed a Commie message [Humphrey Bogart as stand-in for America, tough-talking but with a heart of gold, originally isolationist but slowly but surely drawn into World War II as he/it became aware of the horrors of "fascism"], but they did so totally within the trappings of the bourgeois Old Culture.

Neither were Old Left movies afraid of pleasing the audience by way of happy endings. [And what's *wrong* with happy endings, anyway, except that they make the audience feel happy and they don't push the message that life is evil and meaningless?] But now the grand Old Culture is not only cast aside but scorned and ridiculed, and this nihilist message seems to have the highest priority on the current Left agenda.

As the protagonist and major "player," Tim Robbins sleepwalks through a zombie performance, which has naturally been extravagantly praised by the critics as one of the great acting jobs of the year.

Would that Robert Altman stay away permanently.

### **A League of Their Own**

The Old Culture returns in a

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warm, affectionate story about the American Girls' Professional Baseball League that was established by some baseball owners during World War II and lasted until the early 1950s. The movie catches the spirit of the 1940s,

and its feminist points are therefore never abrasive. Fortunately, the 1990's sensibility is kept out of the film. Geena Davis is excellent as the star baseball player, and director Penny Marshall forges good team performances out of all the players, including even

the notorious Madonna, who is kept subdued and amiable in a minor role as "All the Way, Mae," the strumpet of the team.

The movie falters in the last scenes, when the girl ballplayers of the 1940s go to a reunion in the mid-1980s at Cooperstown, New York, and reminisce over

old times. The problem is not only the older actresses who impersonate Davis, Madonna, etc. forty years later, but even more the mixing-in of the *real* reunion of the professional girls' league at the same time, ending the movie during the final credits with a pathetic and quietly grim scene of these elderly ladies desperately trying to play baseball. The film should have stayed within the forties' context.

Any worries that *A League of Their Own* is too feminist could be eased by reading Georgia Brown's ranting attack in the *Village Voice*, denouncing the movie for depicting women as emotional (how unrealistic!) and as not being sufficiently anti-male.

And what a pleasure to hear the word "girl" spoken again, and with no stern schoolmaster-type rushing up to explain why that term is politically incorrect! Perhaps someday Old Culture films will be made in the context of current life, and not just as historical set-pieces. ■

**Rothbard-Rockwell Report**  
Center for Libertarian Studies  
P.O. Box 4091, Burlingame, CA 94011

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U.S. Postage  
PAID  
San Francisco, CA  
Permit No. 1987