

LIVING WHITE: A PERSONAL CHALLENGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

ROBERT S. GRIFFIN

Recently, I wrote an article entitled “Rearing Honorable White Children,” in which I reported on the parenting practices of racially conscious white parents whom I had encountered while writing a book on the white nationalist William Pierce.¹ That article reflected what I have privately come to refer to as a “living white” perspective, by which I mean the piece was essentially about racially aware white people engaging in activity that reflects their racial beliefs and commitments. It is this living white perspective that I explore in this writing.

The living white perspective, or construct, shines a light on the nature and quality of the lives of individual white people—this one, that one, and that one over there, and you and me. How are we doing? Day to day, month to month, year to year, are we doing what is natural and right for us? Are we living with integrity, in alignment with our deepest insights and highest values? Are we living proudly and openly and courageously? Are we getting important things done? Are we healthy and happy? Are we loved and supported? Are we living honorable white lives?

This concern for the circumstance of individual white men and women and boys and girls reflects a “small picture” in contrast to a “big picture” frame of reference, the latter being more abstract, theoretical, and impersonal. By big picture I mean analyses of what is happening in society overall, what is going on politically, what ideas and ways ought to prevail in the culture, that sort of thing. In this white racial area, a big picture orientation might result in a consideration of what is happening with immigration in America, or interracial crime, or white nationalist political strategies. At least potentially, small picture and big picture orientations are complementary, each informing and completing the other. The ideal, it seems to me, is a white racialist worldview that harmoniously integrates “all-of-it”—matters of history, philosophy, analyses of the cultural and social context, visions of the future of the race, and so on—with “one-of-it,” which concerns the fates of particular, mortal white men, women, and children.

I see an imbalance at the moment, however: namely, too much focus on the big picture at the expense of the small picture. That is to say, I think we are better at talking about how it all works than how our individual lives work. My worry is that without greater attention to what I am calling living white—specific and realistic personal goals and down-to-earth, practical strategies and

actions for achieving those goals—too many racially conscious white people will end up talkers rather than doers, and feel okay about that. Too many will become reviewers, commentators, spectators in life, rather than participants. Too many will come to assume that circumstances in the world and in their own lives are bigger than they can do anything about and as a consequence they will live lives characterized more by coping and hiding out than by honest self-expression. Too many will live with a significant discrepancy between what they know and value and the way they conduct their lives, and this will gnaw at them and, over time, take its personal toll on them. Too many will have lives that are more frustrating than gratifying—“knowing the score” and “talking a good game” are a poor substitute for living with dignity.

Thus I think it advisable to give greater attention to the manner in which actual white people conduct their lives. My assumption is that there are ways of living that grow out of white people’s basic nature and cultural heritage. If that is so, if there is an approach to life that is natural to us, consistent with who we are, what is it? What does it mean to live white? What does it mean for whites collectively, and—the concern here—what does it mean for an individual? How does an individual answer that question for himself, or herself? And after answering it—or anyway, resolving it—the question becomes, is she or he actually managing to live that way? Is he or she getting it done? Getting it done involves figuring this out, concretely, and then implementing it successfully. It involves getting from hopes to reality. Goal achievement capability is crucially important: living an honorable white life takes more than insight and good intentions; it takes efficacy, the ability to make things happen in one’s own life. It takes “how-to” capability. Another way to put it: the white racialist movement needs a technology of personal change to complement its ideological positions and social and cultural analyses and programs.

THE BASICS

White persons are born with a particular genetic makeup. They grow up, and live as adults amid particular influences, prominent among them their racial and cultural heritage, their parents and other relatives, friends and acquaintances, their church, neighborhood, and school, the contemporary social and cultural circumstance, and the mass media. They find mates and some work to do and a place to live. They create a family and rear children. They take part in leisure activities. They engage the larger world: organizations, politics, the public discourse. They experience success and failure, love and satisfaction, pain and regret. They get sick and get well and then get sick and die, leaving whatever mark on posterity they do. The idea of living white says to each of us: this is the playing field of your life. Work within this context and fashion an honorable life as a white man or woman.

There isn't just one way to be an honorable white person, but I propose honorable white lives have some common characteristics:

1. There is a strong sense of *racial identity and pride*.
2. There is a strong sense of *racial commitment*, a dedication to live in accordance with the highest ideals or standards of the white race.
3. There is a sense of *racial responsibility* to one's racial brethren.
4. There is *racial integrity*. There is a tight fit between the individual's highest racial convictions and actions. A tight fit, not a perfect fit; life isn't perfect, but there is a good correspondence between one's racial beliefs and one's deeds.
5. There is *courage and toughness*. These days, the world is very unfriendly to people with a strong white racial consciousness, to the point that it would do them in if it could. Living white requires fortitude, and it requires hardness and resilience. Living white means being fierce when it's called for and knowing how to fight and being willing to do it.
6. There is *physical and mental health*. You can't get it done if you are dragging physically—tired, washed out, overweight, half sick, and addicted to one thing or another, as so many people are, even those who are considered to be in good health. And you can't get it done if inner demons call the shots and lead you off into the marshes.
7. There is a *positive mental attitude*. Unfortunately, the most highly developed capability among many white racials is identifying how somebody else (often another white racist) is wrong or messed up, and being pessimistic and cynical—a sure ticket to personal stagnation and inner upheaval.
8. There is *efficacy* (how-to capability). You can't live with integrity and responsibility if you are unable to get good things done. Significant accomplishment is necessary to living white. Significant accomplishment doesn't have to mean altering American foreign policy in the Middle East. It can mean getting good results with your children. It can mean finding work that allows you to express your values and live more honestly. It can mean creating a living space that reflects who you truly are. Efficacy comes down to the ability to set tangible, imaginable, realizable objectives and take effective action to achieve those goals. Some people seem to know everything about everything, but when they try to do something they come up short. Others seem to spend all their time weighing options and making plans that they will implement when the time is right—but the time is never right.
9. And a last characteristic common to those living an honorable white life: *personal happiness*. By personal happiness I mean a basic sense of satisfaction, of gratification. It is the experience of "Yes, life is good." Indeed, there are pain and loss and downtimes, as there are in every life, but pervading it all is the conclusion, "I'm living the life I should live." Amid the struggles and setbacks, and outweighing them by far, is victory and self-respect and peace of mind. I believe that happiness results from doing what you ought to do, and white people ought to live true to their nature and their heritage. If you don't, if you live with major incongruities between how you conduct your life and who you are at the

core of your being, you may have cars and houses and worldly acclaim and people who admire and love you, but still, deep down, you won't experience real happiness.

POSSIBILITIES

Below, I'll describe five outcomes that have resulted for me from looking at things through the lens of living white. I hope this list encourages readers to identify concerns and projects related to their own interests and circumstances.

First, I have been prompted to talk to other people about what it means to live white. Here's one example from a recent e-mail exchange: "My thoughts on the 'white way of life,'" my correspondent offered, "are that there's a quietness, an industriousness and a graciousness about it. Whites tend to their gardens, work in their fields, chop wood, walk their dogs, smoke their pipes, write their letters and read their books. They make things with their hands. They speak softly. I see this in rural, suburban, and urban settings. This may come as a surprise to you, but one good example of this is Garrison Keillor's radio program on NPR. Keillor features white folk music and wistful tales of this character and that: the parson and his failed romance, the football star who became principal, the spinster librarian and her delicious apple pies. Keillor doesn't glorify high-flying capitalists and violent rap stars but rather celebrates modesty, frugality, peacefulness, and respect for natural forces. Keillor captures the white spirit well: sturdy values, gentle humor, matter-of-factness, church socials, calm perseverance, enjoyment of the simple things . . . really, the joys and sweet sorrows of life on earth, in a community of white racial kin." And then in reply to my response to what he said: "When I referred to 'high-flying capitalist,' I was thinking of a race-traitor type, snorting cocaine in his high-priced Manhattan apartment, with no morals and no loyalty to racial kin, who is bent on enriching himself whatever the cost to anyone or anything else. And I absolutely agree with you that adventurism, artistic intensity, and entrepreneurship are part of what it means to be white. I was just expressing my new-found skepticism of the materialistic individualism promoted by globalist conservatives and libertarians—a crew I once found myself attracted to."

Second, I am finishing up a book made up of the personal accounts of fifteen racially conscious white people, *One Sheaf, One Vine: Fifteen White Americans Talk About Race*. The title comes from a Rudyard Kipling poem, *The Stranger*:

*Let the corn be all one sheaf—
and the grapes be all one vine,
Ere our children's teeth are set on edge
By bitter bread and wine.*

Third, I've thought about the possibilities of a Living White website devoted to practical, how-to-do-it matters, with postings, articles, and links. "I don't like what is happening to my neighborhood and have heard about inexpensive land in Kentucky and building 'backwoods' homes. Where can I learn more about that?" "How do I make my work more reflective of what I believe?" "How can I pass on their heritage to my children?" "How can I get tougher?" (I am reminded of a comment by a white racist: "If you are going to be one of us, you have to be willing to fight up close.") "Is there anything I can do about my children's education besides homeschooling? Is a Waldorf school a good possibility?" "How do I get politically involved?"

Fourth, many racially conscious whites feel isolated and unsupported. Another e-mail acquaintance put it this way: "How can I make some local connections? I feel a need to communicate and collaborate with like-minded folk. I want to be around a healthy Euro way of life that is continuing and growing, where kids are embracing their heritage and its lore and its music." In response to this and similar statements, I have thought about the possibility of what I am calling at this point White Honor Clubs. The idea would be to have local clubs whose purpose is to support members in their efforts to live honorable white lives. It could be a place for social exchange and networking, and for idea sharing and advice giving and mutual support. It could be a place to discuss how to find a good place to live or work that is consistent with your racial ideals, or how to raise and educate children, or how to stand up to the pressure to conform to ideas and ways that are contrary to your racial beliefs. It could be a place to get more informed—books to read, web sites to visit, people to contact, etc.—and stronger personally. It could be a place to identify constructive things to do. It could be a place to identify and undertake collaborative projects, say, in response to some local issue. All of which is to say that a White Honor Club would be about the well-being of the people in the room.

Fifth, over the last five years, and increasingly the past year or so, I have personally tried to move in the directions that I outlined in the last section—toward greater racial identity and integrity, toward courage and health and a more positive mental attitude. I am living a truer life now than before, and, indeed, I'm happier now than I was.

THE CHALLENGE AND THE RESPONSIBILITY

The living white idea says that if we want to improve the world we need to improve ourselves. It says that we need to go beyond knowing the way and pointing the way to *being* the way. It is not enough for us to understand what is going on in the world and to advocate the right things. The measure of us as individual human beings is the extent to which we engage in a quest to live consistently with what is deepest within us and are at least reasonably successful at it. The living white idea says we need to turn away from the big

issues facing the race long enough to ask, “What am I doing with my time on this earth? In the way I am conducting my life, what do I exemplify racially, what do I further racially? What are some tangible things I can do to live a more honorable white life?” The living white idea says that whatever answer we come to in response to the last of these questions, the one about what I can do, we need to get about doing those things—and not tomorrow, *today*.

*Robert S. Griffin is the author of **The Fame of a Dead Man’s Deeds: An Up-Close Portrait of White Nationalist William Pierce**, available at Amazon.com. He can be contacted at Robert.S.Griffin@uvm.edu.*

END NOTES

1. The article: Robert S. Griffin, “Rearing Honorable White Children: Instilling Racial Identity in Today’s Children,” *American Renaissance*, Vol. 12: No. 10, October 2001, pp. 1, 2,
4. The book: Robert S. Griffin, *The Fame of a Dead Man’s Deeds: An Up-Close Portrait of White Nationalist William Pierce* (Bloomington, IN: 1stBooks Library, 2001).