

Paul Buede
9:30 AM M,W,F

Draft II Powers and Castro. Paradise or Hell?

In the beginning of John Powers' review of the film, "Apollo 13", Mr. Powers describes a very exciting film. He begins ~~with~~, "Apollo 13 has the makings of a masterpiece," ~~He~~ + continues ~~with~~, "Its hard to imagine a story that's richer or more profound-here are men who see the dark side of infinity." ~~However, as he proceeds through his review, his ranting and mad babbling become obnoxious, and in the least a waste of paper.~~ Apparently he felt he needed to be the one reviewer in the Western world who despised the film, and saw an inherent evil in its script. At one point in the beginning of his review he asks "... you might find yourself wondering about the point of the whole journey." After reading this review, I found myself wondering what his point was. After a second reading, it became apparent.

John Powers, who attempts to describe the film as a platform for right-wing, reactionaries, suffers from that affliction which currently is sweeping the media and the Ivy League elite. That affliction is, in a hyphenated word, Liberal-Guilt. Liberal-guilt is simply an attempt by those who unconsciously realize the damage done by their policies, socially. Those who took FDR's New Deal to new and exaggerated levels are prime candidates for this affliction. ~~Why Mr. Powers cannot take his neurosis to a psychologist, or perhaps a new-age Karma-Healer, I do not know. But that certainly would be suggested.~~

Not every definition not at all clear

The author describes what he sees as a "... Republican parable about 1995 America...". He mentions in the same paragraph that it was a "... team of heroic white men." who were responsible for saving the astronauts. Well perhaps Mr. Powers would insist that the film-maker abide by the liberal establishment's affirmative action policies and hire a minority regardless of

Feels he
I must say: Powers didn't do enough to stop American evils, and some ne and his ilk caused e.g. sexual rev.

His guilt stems from his inability to stop American wrongs and his participation in the destruction of society.

you're not really addressing P's arguments.

entertainment -
not
enough
substance

historical fact. In his next paragraph, Powers attacks the film's historical authenticity with only the point that the cinematographer chose not to include certain historical events. He accuses the film of not being long enough, extensive enough, "correct" enough, and liberal enough. Here is prime example of this (what the new-age psychological experts would call a disease) neurosis. Perhaps Mr. Powers feels, in hindsight, that he and those of his political persuasion did not do enough to stop the "Vietnam Conflict." Perhaps, if he could go back, and stop the "sexual revolution" which brought so many diseases into the 6th grader's normal vocabulary, he would. Perhaps, when he sees a teenager in the 90's wearing bell-bottoms, and platform shoes, he feels a sense of remorse for what he and his generation did to fashion in the 20th century. Maybe Mr. Powers even feels guilty for not responding to the Kent State shootings as he, clearly a concerned American should have, with due retaliation against a tyrannical regime. I am not ^{he is} hear to argue about the significance of historical events through which I did not live. And the real point Mr. Powers fails to grasp, is that neither is this film. One is forced to wonder if Powers wants a fictitious story-line just to satisfy his desire to see his own brand of "correct" history told.

~~Powers goes on for several paragraphs writing about other historical events that happened around the same time as the Apollo 13 mission. And I can only wonder, "So what?" Powers' review is as rambling and pointless as he apparently would have the film be. Powers' next attack is on the characters. He compares the film to Star Trek, saying "Kirk, Spock, and McCoy may be cartoons, but at least they're vivid ones." Again, he asserts his correct point that this film is based on reality, not a fairy tale. Where the author of the review wants to go with this is difficult to discern.~~

But what does it have to do with liberalism or guilt?

essay - no quotation marks needed

Later, in this ~~review~~, Powers states that the film "... doesn't even ask the rudimentary questions about the astronauts' inner lives. What does going to the moon really mean to Jim Lovell (Hanks)?" Sadly for Mr. Powers, it would appear he was one of the few people not to see that indeed, the film depicted exactly what it meant to Lovell. It meant everything to him. That was his one desire and goal. It consumed him, and ate at him, if he could not be the first, then by God he would at least be one of the few. Just because Mr. Powers did not understand the film, does not make it acceptable for him to bash it so vigorously. Perhaps someone should tell him, that it's ok if he didn't get it. But this continuous bashing shows his inability to understand a story that is so real, and shows his lack of grounding in reality, which makes one wonder "Where is John Powers?"

At the end of Powers' virtual treatise on the demise of American film-making, he chooses to make an argument one would expect to find in a Sociology Journal. He mentions his "signiphobia" theory. While one may or may not agree with what Powers believes is a national epidemic, his review miserably fails in proving that point. Indeed, Powers ends his review with "Hollywood, we have a problem." And in response I feel compelled to say, "yes, we need to jettison YOU into space."

You don't stay with the "liberal guilt" focus, & the essay moves more to a point by point rebuttal of Powers, which becomes somewhat loose & unfocused. I'd stay w/ the liberal guilt, but you also need to define & explain the phenomenon more clearly. You present what, to me, is an unusual version of it. I've always understood it not as guilt over the acts & policies of liberals (e.g. New Deal, Great Society, etc) but rather over more general acts & policies of the U.S. as a whole - e.g. Killing of Indians, slavery & continuing racism, poverty, Vietnam, etc. Liberal policies are often attempts to soften the effects →

of these past injustices, & thus can be interpreted by conservatives as examples of liberals feeling guilty about being American.

I think this is what most conservatives mean by liberal guilt.

If you want to present a different version, you need to explain it more clearly, distinguish it from the standard version, & show why it's more useful in this case.

However you present it, you then should show more precisely how P's critique is an instance of liberal guilt. Analyze in detail the points he makes - the relevant pts, i.e. about history esp. & syncretism. I don't think the pts about character development really need to enter your essay.

Also, it's probably time in this draft to cut the ad hominem stuff -
Latin: "against the man"
the personal insults. They're fun, but they're detracting from your argument now.

B-

Paul Busack

Self Review of Second Draft

possibly strike overly insulating lines, in favor of letting reader draw those conclusions.

throw in more "seems" or "appears" to be more "subtle"
Powers seems ok. it is to contradict Powers at every turn and do to Powers what he does to film in ascribing a deep seeded, "secret", political agenda.

Without "re-brainstorming" I like "The Last Liberals Last Review (Hopefully)" as a subtitle.

Synopsis

In summary, John Powers fails to make his point. Unfortunately, he feels that a cigar cannot just be a cigar. His criticisms of the characters are top-rote, considering, it is difficult to inflate, or change the substance of characters who are/were real. In the end, John Powers belief that because a film is remarkably apolitical, it must, therefore, be secretly and inherently political; fails to stand against the perceptions of objective movie-goers. John Powers just doesn't get it, and his focus is telling us that. All that is left to say to John Powers is, "It's ok, you're allowed to not understand every movie you see."

Nominalization

After a second reading, it became apparent.

