

Harvard Embraces Bathhouse Values

By PATRICK J. BUCHANAN

What happened in 1920, wails Larry Summers, was "abhorrent and an affront to the values of our university. We are a better and more just community today because those attitudes have changed."

"In Harvard Papers, a Dark Corner of the College's Past" is the headline *The New York Times* pasted over the story of the unearthing of Harvard's hidden sin. What was it? Did Harvard burn a heretic in the basement of the faculty club? Did Harvard condone a lynching?

None of the above. Eighty-two years ago, Harvard University expelled eight students and a teacher who were caught up in a sex scandal at the school. This is the "dark corner of Harvard's past" for which Harvard President Larry Summers begs forgiveness. Summers is right about one thing. This episode, and his abject apology, do speak to different values at Harvard today. But let the reader judge whether Harvard has embraced a higher morality.

Here is the story. In May 1920, Cyril Wilcox, a 21-year-old with falling grades and failing health, was asked to leave Harvard. After dropping out, Wilcox committed suicide in his Fall River home by inhaling gas. But before taking his life, he told his older brother George he had been sexually in-

volved with an older man in Boston.

After Cyril's death, two letters to him arrived at his home. The first alluded to a homosexual ring at Harvard to which Cyril had belonged. The second was written in a strange code.

An angry George Wilcox went to Boston, found the man who had seduced his brother, and beat the truth out of him. He got the names of three other homosexuals involved in the ring and took them, with news of his brother's suicide and the two letters, to Dean Chester N. Greenough. Greenough informed President A. Lawrence Lowell, who commissioned Greenough to set up a secret "court" to investigate the scandal and suicide, and report back directly.

This court heard testimony from those accused of belonging to the homosexual ring that had assembled late at night in dorm rooms for parties, a ring that included a son of Cong. Ernest Roberts. A message, sent anonymously to the court, described the parties: "The most disgusting and disgraceful and revolting acts of degeneracy and depravity took place openly in plain view of all present."

After interrogating students, the court handed down 14 guilty verdicts. Seven college students, a

dental student, a teacher, a recent Harvard graduate, and four Boston men were ordered out of Harvard and out of Cambridge. On June 12, a court member wrote to ex-Cong. Roberts: "Your son. . . is still in Cambridge, in spite of our instruction. Strongly urge that you send for him or come for him yourself at once. He has been ordered to leave Cambridge today. Consequences of disobedience of this order would be most serious."

After studying the AP and *New York Times*' stories, one is left wondering what exactly Summers feels obligated to apologize for. While the *Times* alleges in bold print that "eighty years ago, Harvard engaged in an anti-gay campaign," it produces no evidence Harvard conducted any witch-hunt to root out closet homosexuals.

Harvard appears to have quietly expelled a few deviants while avoiding a public scandal that would have ruined their reputations and damaged Harvard's good name. What did Harvard do wrong?

Are today's Harvard students and faculty, and Summers truly ignorant that there was a time, not long ago, when campus orgies were grounds for expulsion? In some colleges, bringing a member

of the opposite sex into one's dorm for purposes of sex can still get you expelled. As for homosexual parties, they still mean immediate severance from the Armed Forces of the United States.

What is revealing about this episode is not what was done in 1920, but that an Ivy League president feels compelled to apologize for it in 2002. Does Summers realize what he is saying?

He is declaring that homosexual sodomy, even orgies, in the dorms at Harvard are protected social conduct, fully consistent with the moral character expected of students. Harvard's moral values are now the values of the San Francisco bathhouse.

Harvard's code is now based on Summers' values, which hold that the old moral code of Christianity, which teaches that sexual relations between men are unnatural and immoral, is "abhorrent and an affront to the values of our university."

Harvard has not only turned its back on its Christian past, it has just renounced its Christian roots as poisoned and perverted.

If Harvard is educating America's leaders, this country is not Slouching Toward Gomorrah, we are sprinting there.