

[The following piece was submitted on March 28 for publication and turned down by the editorials editor Martha Fulford, who wrote me in full April 2: "Thank you very much for your submission. We were very interested in your views on the important matters that you presented. Unfortunately we will not be able to publish your submission as a guest column." I think it is important for the Yale community to be aware of the way Zakaria reports "facts", and of the way the YDN does or does not report certain facts. I am therefore publishing the piece as an advertisement. Serge Lang]

FACTS, OPINIONS, AND SCHOLARSHIP

by Serge Lang

The 26 March YDN reported Fared Zakaria's talk at Yale the previous evening. He is editor of *Newsweek International*. I think the following facts, concerning Zakaria's judgment and reliability, deserve being brought to the attention of the Yale community.

1. In *Newsweek* dated March 15, 2004, p. 21, Zakaria published a full page editorial article under the heading "World View – The Radicals Are Desperate", where he states:

Unable to launch major terrorist attacks in the West, unable to attract political support in the Middle East, militant Islam is searching for enemies and causes...Once the United States mobilized against them, and got the world to join that fight, what have they hit? A discothèque, a few synagogues, a couple of restaurants and hotels, all soft targets that could not ever be protected, and all outside the Western world...By now surely it is clear that Al Qaeda can produce videotapes but not terrorism. In fact, its poorly produced tapes, threatening spectacular attacks, are becoming a joke...

Is it a "fact"? a "joke"? to whom? Zakaria published the above "world view" at about the same time as the bombings in Spain (March 11, reported next day in the newspapers), and their subsequent effect on the Spanish election. Let the Yale community evaluate Zakaria's characterization of what is "clear", what is a "fact", and what is "becoming a joke", especially since Zakaria is a product of the Yale-Harvard educational system.

2. Indeed, Zakaria is a Yale graduate. I learned of his existence in 1987, when he was a graduate student in the Government Department at Harvard. Following the non-election of Samuel P. Huntington to the National Academy of Sciences, widely reported in the press, Zakaria published a personal attack against me in the *New Republic* (27 June 1987), under the title: "The professor's vendetta – BLOOD LUST IN ACADEMIA." I (and others) had evaluated critically some of Huntington's works. For instance, I objected to some items in Huntington's book *Political Order in Changing Societies*, where he invoked a study by two other political scientists (Ivo K. and Rosalind Feierabend) concerning countries throughout the world. Among these countries was South Africa, classified as a "satisfied society". Zakaria, writing to justify Huntington, quoted him as follows:

Huntington says: "The term 'satisfied' has to do with whether or not there are measurable signs that people are satisfied or not with their lot. That lot may be good, fair, or awful; what this particular term is describing is the fact that the people for some reason are not protesting it. When this study...was done in the early 1960's, there had been no major riots, or disturbances [in South Africa]..."

Note once more the occurrence of the word “fact”. The study dealt with the 1950’s decade, and the above purportedly factual assertion is completely false. Throughout this decade, constantly, there were riots, strikes, jailings of Blacks, police firing on crowds, culminating with the Sharpeville massacre of March 1960 when 50 people were killed. When Zakaria’s *New Republic* article appeared in 1987, I decided to check out the above factual assertion (“the fact that...”). It turned out that such riots, strikes and disturbances were reported constantly throughout the decade in the *New York Times* (among other places), and I made a 50-page collage of these articles, which I circulated in 1987. No correction was ever made by Huntington, Zakaria, or the *New Republic*. Four pages of headlines from the above mentioned articles are reproduced in my book *Challenges* (Springer Verlag 1998), pp. 65-68, as part of a more extensive analysis.

The library search for reports on South Africa in the *New York Times* was done at my request by Annette Flowers, from UC Berkeley where I was at the time. She wrote me some comments pertinent to the educational backdrop behind the falsehood propagated by Huntington-Zakaria-*New Republic*:

Dear Professor Lang,

I feel compelled to express my gratitude to you for working as hard on showing Samuel Huntington’s professional incompetence. I find infuriating that political opinions passed off as scholarship could go unquestioned for so long. As an undergraduate student majoring in Sociology at Berkeley, I realize the disservice Huntington has done to the social sciences; and as a Black woman, I realize the disservice he has done to the 20 millions South American Blacks. Given the ease with which I found articles on demonstrations, strikes, and riots in South Africa during the years in which Huntington and Feierabend both stated that South Africa was a “satisfied society”, it makes me think that neither took the time (or felt it necessary) to gauge the feelings of the 20 million South African Blacks or even the segments of the white population who also participated in many of the demonstrations.

What worries me the most is that until you made the effort to check further into Huntington’s qualifications for elections into the National Academy of Sciences, Huntington’s book *Political Order in Changing Societies* had not really been looked at critically...

Sincerely, s / Annette Flowers

Be it noted that the AASS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) awarded the “Socio-Psychological Prize”, now known as the prize for Behavioral Sociology, to the Feierabends for the above mentioned study, including the “frustration ratio” which they used to determine “satisfaction”, and which they define as follows: “The frustration index was a ratio. A country’s combined coded score on the six satisfaction scores (GNP, caloric intake, telephones, physicians, newspapers, and radios) was divided by either the country’s coded literacy or coded urbanization score, whichever was higher”. This is not even false; it’s cockeyed, inane, and the AAAS is thus in the business of certifying this garbage as science. Huntington and Zakaria gave no evidence that they were aware of the “frustration ratio”. For references and an extensive analysis of the many issues (scientific, educational, historical, journalistic, political, cultural, institutional, ad lib) raised by the Feierabend-AAAS-Huntington-Zakaria circuit, cf. *Challenges*, pp. 31-220.