Question Insanity: What to Ask Progressives

December 27, 2010 – **by Oleg Atbashian**

An ex-Soviet immigrant goes Socratic on his liberal American critics.

The two women who showed up early for my book signing at a small bookstore in Houston, TX, never even bothered to open my book. Wearing knowing smiles, they engaged me in a bizarre discussion that wound up leaping all around the known and unknown universe. They hadn't the slightest curiosity about my ideas as an ex-Soviet immigrant in America, or what I had to say about my experience working inside the two ideologically opposed systems. As it turned out, they had spotted my flyer in the store window the day before, and the book's title – Shakedown Socialism – had enraged them so much that they decided to return the following day and give me a piece of their collective mind.

Their act almost made me feel as if I were back in the USSR, where the harassment of people with my opinions was the norm. The shorter, pudgier woman was the soloist bully, while her skinnier, older comrade provided backup vocals and noise effects. The duo's repertoire was an eclectic collection of unoriginal talking points, each branded with an almost legible label: NPR, Air America, MSNBC, and so on. Not only were those mental fragments mismatched in key and rhythm; the very existence of harmony seemed an unfamiliar concept to them. But compared to the hard-core screaming I used to hear from card-carrying Soviet bullies, this was almost elevator music. If I had survived the original cast, I could certainly handle a watered-down remake.

Pajamas Media

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A Clause for any cause.



A Clause for Concern: Cross Examining the Interstate Commerce Clause

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SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT WRITING

Thomas Sowell

Some young would-be writers may lament their misfortune in

> *living out in the boondocks, instead of being at the heart of the publishing industry in New York. When I first started writing, in my teens, I lived in New York City and worked in downtown Manhattan. That is how I got my rejection slips back so fast. If I had lived out in Podunk, I could have dreamed on, in a fool's Paradise, from Monday morning until Thursday or Friday evening, before the brutal truth caught up with me.*

From time to time, I get a letter from some aspiring young writer, asking about how to write or how to get published. My usual response is that the only way I know to become a good writer is to be a bad writer and keep on improving. However, even after you reach the point where you are writing well—and that can take many years—the battle is not over. There are still publishers to contend with. Then there are editors and, worst of all, copy-editors.

Finally, the last hurdle are the book reviewers, only some of whom actually review the book. These people are all part of the gauntlet that the writer has to run, in order to reach the person for whom his writing was intended from the outset—the reader. All too often, you never know if your book has reached the reader in any sense other than the fact that it was bought. It could be gathering dust on a table or a shelf. In some cases, however, heartfelt letters come in, telling you that your book has reached readers in the sense in which you wanted it to reach them. That makes all the struggle seem worthwhile.

Read more by Thomas Sowell.

Peedie's Christmas

By Lorraine Brown Jones
Illustrated by Cosette Riggs
Published by *Inspired Originals*
Available at Create Space for $9.99 and Amazon.com for $13.33.
(Price at Amazon may come down.)
Web Site



In the *The Night Before Christmas*, nothing was stirring, not even a mouse. In the nineteen page child's book, *Peedie's Christmas*, Peedie—a mouse—is stirring and believes that he has ruined Christmas.

I am not a connoisseur of the child's book as I have just finished puberty. And my kids are a little older. I do have a little expert next door whom has promised to read it and let me know her opinion. I'll let you know the results.

UPDATE: My little reader tells me that she liked the book. She was probably more fascinated with the illustrations since she is not at the reading stage. Her Dad, however, said it was very well done and a cute story.

The illustrations are nice and the poem is smooth. The illustrator—also author of Peach Springs and The Clade Letters: The Beginning—explained that the poem was from her mother. Cosette decided to put the story to print with her own illustrations. You can see a sample of the illustrations at the Amazon link above. I am told that she did the illustrations in oil on typing paper and scanned them in. It

seems to have worked well.

Priced under ten dollars, it is small enough to make a great stocking stuffer for this holiday season and might help inspire a little reader.