January 21, 2015

**Note for Dianne Sehler**

I have received a letter from Michael Grebe asking that I submit nominations for the 2015 Bradley Prizes.

I am utterly distracted in the days remaining for submitting full nominations, but three of my hardy, hearty perennials from years past—Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Charles Murray, and Christina Hoff Sommers—will almost certainly be nominated by others. If so you will have complete, up-to-date files on them, and in all events you may have saved my past nominations with full case statements and references in your files.

Here are supplemental thoughts on why these three continue to be worthy of the Bradley Prize:

**Ayaan Hirsi Ali’s** braveassessments of the nature and dangers of radical Islam began a decade ago and have been proved terribly prescient in recent years. She contributed brilliant analyses of terrorist attacks such as the Boston Marathon bombing of 2013 and the Paris slaughter of earlier this month. Her dis-invitation last year to be a Brandeis commencement speaker and honoree, followed by a stirring appearance at Yale, attracted national attention. Now teaching at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, Hirsi Ali has just completed her fourth book, *Heretic—*a stunning work, addressed primarily to moderate Muslims, which will be published in the spring by HarperCollins. It argues that a Muslim Reformation is essential to subduing radical Islamic terrorism, and describes how such a reformation might be achieved—with specific proposals for accommodating Islam with liberal modern values and secular society, proposals that draw on the accommodations Judaism and Christianity achieved long ago but attend to the particulars of Islamic theology. It is sure to be widely read and reviewed; with luck it could be a sensation.

**Charles Murray** is a singularly strong candidate, for reasons that you and the members of the selection committee will well understand. *Coming Apart* (2012) was the capstone of thirty years of transformative scholarship about American society, culture, and class structure. It was as provocative and widely debated as *Losing Ground* and *The Bell Curve*, but this time the debates were up to the book: they were respectful and for the most part laudatory from all quarters of the political spectrum. I take this as overdue recognition of the seriousness and importance of Murray’s social scientific work that has been there all along. Later this year, Murray the libertarian reformer will be back—in *By the People: Rebuilding Liberty Without Permission*, which is concerned with the decline of constitutional restraints and the growth of government regulation, and offers a characteristically bold plan for reform.

**Christina Hoff Sommers** has long been our deepest critic of the excesses of academic feminism, and most persistent tribune against the penetration if its dogmas into mainstream culture. In recent years her work has become central to several fraught controversies—over the “wage gap” and proposed Paycheck Fairness Act; over the “campus rape culture” and weakening of due process protections for students accused of sexual assault; over the suppression of competition and censure of boisterous play in primary schools; and over the demonizing of normal male enthusiasms in many areas of social criticism and cultural leadership. In 2013 she published two superb books: the revised second edition of her best selling *The War Against Boys*, and *Freedom Feminism*, a tour of feminist history showing that conservative women and ideas have been critical at every stage of women’s progress, including the current one. In 2014 she conceived and launched “The Factual Feminist,” a weekly video that takes up current issues in gender politics with calm intelligence and frequent humor; I understand that it is far and away AEI’s most viewed, tweeted, and You Tubed web offering.

I hope these thoughts are helpful to you.

With best wishes,

Chris DeMuth

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