

tant point. I believe this point structures her entire argument for her concept of cultural literacy. Throughout the book Massaro demonstrates that she is sensitive to the hegemonic possibilities of a national core curriculum and how it will affect religious, racial, gender, and other cultural minorities. Given our current legal framework, however, the interests of culturally marginal groups in the content of a core curriculum can only be protected by educators and the majority. The best that culturally marginal groups can hope for is that "by teaching our conflicts" about constitutional rights, their concepts of our important constitutional rights would be presented along with more traditionally accepted notions. This implied conclusion, though an accurate assessment of the current legal framework, is likely not to sound very encouraging to most culturally marginal groups.

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*The Jewish Onslaught: Despatches from the Wellesley Battlefield.* By Tony Martin. (Dover, Mass.: Majority Press, 1993. xii, 144 pp. Paper, \$9.95, ISBN 0-912469-30-7.)

This is not a work of scholarship. It is not likely to convince skeptical readers. It is a scurrilous polemic "written in the heat of battle" by an embattled historian—a self-described "intended victim" of "purveyors of intolerance."

In 1993, Wellesley College historian Tony Martin, author of a major study of Marcus Garvey, assigned *The Secret Relationship between Blacks and Jews*, published in 1991 by the Historical Research Department of the Nation of Islam, as a reading for his survey course on African-American history. Martin's assignment of the book led Jewish students to monitor his class and prompted sharp criticisms from Jewish groups and others at Wellesley.

Martin reports that the attacks against him were fierce and often intemperate. *The Secret Relationship* mines the scholarly literature to locate evidence that Jews "participated in every aspect of the international slave trade." Its handling of the considerable scholarship—for the

most part written by Jews—on this topic was by no means balanced, but many of Martin's academic critics were also not exemplars of scholarly dispassion. The black students who rallied to Martin's defense were unlikely to be dissuaded by noted scholars who apparently had not read *The Secret Relationship*. Martin sardonically reports that the Wellesley administration denounced the book as "anti-Semitic in both tone and character" while insisting that this was "true without reference to the accuracy or the inaccuracy of each historical contention contained within its pages." Despite Martin's insistence that his job was threatened by his Jewish critics, academic freedom functioned as it should have to protect the employment of this tenured professor who used a controversial text in the classroom.

Seeing himself as a victim of Jewish intolerance, Martin attacks his critics with the kind of vitriol that undermines his pose as a "detached" scholar. Like the authors of *The Secret Relationship*, Martin's single-minded goal is to accumulate evidence that Jews are invariably antiblack and thereby to discourage contemporary alliances between African Americans and Jews. While dismissing as "predictable" and "hackneyed" the allegation that he is anti-Semitic, Martin portrays his opponents as part of an "ongoing Jewish onslaught against Black progress." Negative press accounts of his case are attributed to "overwhelming" "Jewish media influence." Jewish Talmudic scholars, according to Martin, invented "the Hamitic Myth (that is, the association of the African with the supposed curse of Noah)."

Martin rejects the view that such generalizations constitute anti-Semitism—a label that he asserts has been used by Jews as "a bludgeon to subdue dissent, stifle discussion, deprive African Americans of a living and perpetuate historical lies." He is clearly someone who sees Jewish influence as ubiquitous and consistently hostile to African-American interests. Like other African Americans who publicly criticize Jews, Martin expresses the increasing black disillusionment with traditional civil rights strategies and with black leaders who rely on Jewish support. His most vicious invective is reserved for black scholarly critics who have become the "unthinking Negro

stooges" of "the privileged and powerful U.S. Jewish leadership." Harvard University's Henry Louis Gates, Jr., is dismissed as "African America's most notorious Judaeophile." Martin's diatribe is a skirmish of an increasingly vicious battle between Afrocentric and mainstream scholars for preeminence in African-

American intellectual life. As often happens when scholars become warriors, polemics replace scholarship and truth is a casualty of Truth.

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