

Elitism

By : **Bill Rayburn**

In defense of what many think is indefensible. How being smart makes elitism inevitable, and then reconciling with it. (approx. 610 words)



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All people are *NOT* created equal. Not even close. The incredible disparity in the quality of humanity simply mocks the absurd declaration that people live life on the same level. We don't.

Never have, never will.

Yet, all people, at least until their behavior proves they deserve otherwise, should be treated with dignity. Dignity and equality is not the same thing. There is a difference.

Elitism gets a bad rap. If you look it up, there is a subtle, underlying, unsavory tone to the definition. It gives off a whiff of Puritanical disapproval.

I consider myself an elitist. Not by any conscious choice, but evolving naturally over the years from simply plowing through life on a different, and yes, higher, more evolved level than most people I have encountered. I am convinced that for me, it is inevitable to arrive at that conclusion. Inescapable, when living life from my intellectual premise.

My intellectual premise? Self reliance. Pay attention. Take responsibility for your behavior. And bring a boat load of common sense to the dance, or you ain't ever hittin' the "real" dance floor. IQ, of course, is a factor. But not a deal breaker.

Elitism, however, wields a powerful double-edged sword. Any feelings of superiority are *severely* tempered by the isolation it creates between me and my fellow wo/man. There is a very real world of isolation that goes with being an elitist.

I have led an un-aristocratic life. High school diploma, never having graced the inside of a college classroom, never achieving a high powered CEO type job. I have sold shoes, and then graduated to store manager. I have bussed tables. I have stocked beer and booze at a liquor store. I have sliced meats and cheeses at a deli. Some of these jobs were in my twenties, yet some of them were in my 30s. Think about that. I was *never* ashamed or embarrassed to toil in such "menial" positions. In fact, I took pride in being the best at those jobs.

There is a phenomenon I see often, as I'm sure most of you have. You go into a store, where the person required to help you is inept, or indifferent, or bored, or callous, or lazy, or stupid. And they drag your sales transaction into the mediocrity of their life, leaving you with a mild bitter taste in your mouth.

I will confess that, on occasion, in an advanced state of ill humor, I have chastised some of these people. What did I say to them? "You know, the only thing worse than having to do this job you are obviously not happy to do, *IS DOING IT BADLY!*"

It's a matter of common sense, and personal pride. I've done the shit jobs. I've excelled at them. Of course, that doesn't stroke my ego; it was simply a way of looking at things. A way of approaching how

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you want to feel about the way you are living your life.

I am cordial to people who are cordial to me. I am never rude or condescending to people unless they warrant it. A person's position in society; clerk, waiter, etc. never determines how I respond to or treat them. I simply mirror back their own behavior. And sometimes, if not often, it is not good behavior.

So, where does that leave me?

I have not embraced elitism. It enveloped me. As I said before, it was inescapable. Unavoidable. If you live life on the raw, unfiltered intellectual level that I do, it is a fait accompli.

I question its presence in my life occasionally, but I acknowledge its presence as necessary, and ultimately, the truth.

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