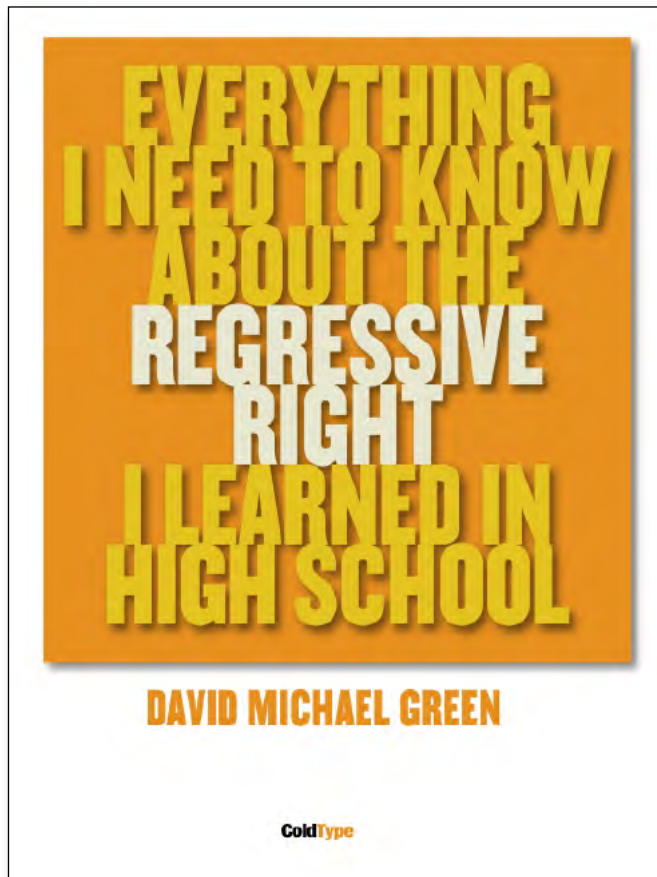


**EVERYTHING  
I NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT THE  
REGRESSIVE  
RIGHT  
I LEARNED IN  
HIGH SCHOOL**

**DAVID MICHAEL GREEN**

**ColdType**



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More of his work can be found at his website, <http://regressiveantidote.net>

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## EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW . . . DAVID MICHAEL GREEN

**REGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES** aren't really so hard to figure out. You just need to know the key.

It's junior high.

Remember those delightful years of comity and enlightenment, comradeship, maturity and social inclusiveness?

Yeah, me neither.

For most folks, those junior high years might as well have been a Wes Craven movie, full of Freddie's and Jasons and metaphorical (not to mention the occasional actual) chain-saw murderers. And why wouldn't they be? Throw a bunch of incredibly immature kids together into a big building, pump them up full of raging hormones and self-centered, consumer-driven, amped-up, self-absorbed me-ism, and see what happens. No need to even light a match.

I suspect that for most of us, these were the nightmare years of awkwardness, emotional pinball, and deep wounds over small slights. Oh, and zits, too – just in case you were somehow feeling too good about yourself on any given day.

But for those of you who have for some reason been wishing that you could return to those golden years, I've got news for you: You already have! That's right, ladies and gentlemen. Courtesy of the regressive right and its Grand Old Party (and isn't it just grand?), we're reliving all those many joys again and again.

But here's the good news: Once you understand this, there's no longer any mystery to figuring out these clowns.

That's 'cause everything you need to know about the regressive right you already learned in junior high.

For instance:

● **Elitism Is For Elites!** What's wrong with some people having all the goodies and most everybody else having little or none? That whole egalitarianism critique is for tenth-graders, man! When you're in junior high, though, it all just makes perfect sense. Certain golden children were born to rule, and the rest were born to have it

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lauded over us, when we weren't being laughed at, that is! You can certainly see that today in regressive policies on war and taxes, to name just two. Rich people paying taxes or Republicans going to Vietnam? Pshaw! Why do you think they keep us hoi polloi around, anyhow, other than to fight their wars and pay their tax bills?!?!)

● **Personal Destruction Is Cool!** Have you ever looked at guy like Karl Rove or Tom DeLay and wondered how any human could be capable of such incredible meanness, such personal savagery? The answer is simple: Only somebody who is permanently stuck in junior high mode could do such things. Remember how they called us traitors – even those of us who had given up three of our four limbs in Vietnam – because we opposed their war of lies? Remember how they made up vicious lies about even their own people in order to win elections? Does that ring any bells from your own experience? If there's anything meaner than a junior high kid, I don't know what it is. Screw the Manhattan Project. Heck, we already had the world's nastiest weapons of mass destruction at our disposal!

● **It's A Really Scary World Out There.** When you're in junior high, things happen to you, not the other way around. You aren't exactly very much in control of your own life, other than by being willing to play the one card you've got: non-cooperative self-destruction. It isn't exactly a moment replete with high quantities of personal agency. But I'm struck by how many regressives seem stuck in that crouch of reactionary fear and militant defensiveness, well beyond their adolescence. Sure, we're all still subjected to the whims of nature and the exigencies of other people's actions to a considerable extent. But, as adults, we also get the option of controlling our own destiny to an equally considerable extent. There's no longer any reason to continually feel like frightened, mistrusting, targeted, cornered victims anymore, nor to act selfishly and aggressively in every situation because of those fears. Humans can mature and learn to cooperate. That's one of the key lessons you're supposed to learn as you move toward adulthood.

● **Lying, Cheating, Secretiveness and Hypocrisy Will Get You What You Want.** Junior high kids aren't exactly the paragons of virtue. Not that anyone who even occasionally reads the news these days could continue to suffer under the illusion that even paragons of virtue are paragons of virtue. Can you say 'Catholic Church'? 'Closeted Republicans'? 'Major League Baseball'? 'Bush administration'? But I digress. The point is just this. We expect a certain degree of moral impropriety from adolescents, don't we? That's their job, and ours is to set them straight so that they'll be good cit-

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izens and cooperative campers for the rest of their lives. Take a look at Dick Cheney, though. Here's a guy who figures that he should be able to do and say anything he wants to, anytime he wants to, and get away with it. Including even having a few stiff belts then blasting you in the face with a shotgun! Or dropping the American military into your neighborhood to deliver some white phosphorous. And there's just a whole bunch of folks like that running around these days, I regret to say. They're called the Republican Party.

● **Tantrums Will Get You What You Want.** Did you know that the GOP minority in the Senate has already filibustered to death more legislation in less than half a term than the hapless Democrats did during the entire previous term? Not that it particularly matters. Even if the Congress chosen by the people was actually allowed to do its job by the likes of Mitch McConnell, Young Bushenstein in the White House has already threatened to veto anything they might do, not that any of it is even remotely progressive, anyhow. There was a telling article in the New York Times last week about how when the Republicans were in the majority they war-gamed out all the tactics the Dems might have used in order to block the GOP from accomplishing their legislative agenda. Turns out almost none of them got used. Till now, that is. Now that they are in the minority, the GOP is wielding every trick in the book. As far as I'm concerned, you could stop right there and you'd know just about everything there is to know about both parties. One never forgot everything they could get from adults by throwing the occasional strategically placed obstructionist tantrum. The other maybe got a bit 'too mature' and definitely too polite, and can't figure out how to win any fights, even if people's lives depended on them. Which they do.

● **Thinking For Yourself Is Highly Frowned Upon.** Junior high is nothing if not a giant trend machine. Heck, entire multi-billion dollar fashion, music and gadget industries depend on this fact. Woe be upon anyone who makes the mistake of showing up in some kind of unhip frock or listening to the wrong music selection! The humiliation! The ostracization! Hey, does any of this sound familiar? Have you ever noticed how few regressives allow themselves to think the unthinkable, perhaps muttering out loud, "Gee, it does seem perhaps as though the president might have been just a tad dishonest about the Iraq war"? Have you noticed what happens to them on the rare occasion that this occurs? But now that we're adults, now that we're no longer in junior high, shouldn't we stop acting like a bunch of Stepford Wives, doing what we're told to do, believing what we're supposed to believe just because Rush told us

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“He’s a bad man!”, or our preacher said, “He’s a good man!”? Or, “She’s a feminazi and she’ll bring socialized medicine to America!”? Don’t grown-ups think for themselves? Isn’t that one of the key ways in which they’re different from junior high kids?

● **Girls Are Really, Really Scary.** Any honest and probing assessment of right-wing politics today leads inexorably back to the unavoidable observation that regressives are obsessed with sexuality and everything even remotely related to it, right down to blastocysts and stem-cells. What’s up with that? What’s up with that is a deeply-held constellation of fears and insecurities that men have concerning women, and a resulting desire to control them – and especially their sexuality – in order to compensate for those feelings. Frankly, that alone explains a lot about conservative politics in America these days. You can stop right there and get maybe eighty percent of the picture. And if it reminds you of the same mentality that would wrap women in burkas, or make them the property of men, or burn them alive if their husbands die before they do, or subject them to a 200-lash whipping for the crime of being gang-raped, well then, so it does, and so it should. I’m not sure where these attitudes come from. Maybe Maureen Dowd or some anthropologist somewhere can explain them according to some Darwinian logic. What I do know, however, is that healthy males are supposed to out-grow such feelings, along with tantrums and bad taste in music, as they mature. And what I know for sure is that all these right-wings monsters who are continually trying to control everyone else’s sexuality while secretly wrestling rather unsuccessfully with their own twisted tendencies are the last people who should ever be given a license to legislate.

● **It’s All About Me!** And, really, after all – isn’t it? At least if you’re a conservative, it is. Didn’t you get the memo? I mean, what’s the whole point of even having a planet if it can’t be there to serve your every whim and cater to your every need? Why even bother having other people around if they can’t be your personal human resources department to exploit? Get it? Now you’re ready to sign-up for the GOP! Women, minorities and definitely everyone who lives outside America belong to the servant class, and their job is to make sure you get your out-sized portion of the pie. Yes, even if that means exploitive labor practices so that you can get grossly expensive fashion brands at a price that guarantees massive profits for the manufacturer. Yes, even if that means killing a million Iraqis (who probably deserve it, anyhow, since they were stupid enough to pitch their tents on top of our oil). Yeah, even if it means blocking any serious efforts to mitigate the global warming crisis, while we five percent of the world’s population continue to manufacture twenty-five percent

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of the entire planet's heat-inducing pollutants. Hell, why not go one further and even deny that global warming exists. Science? Screw that. We're partying! Get it, now? Heck, these days good regressives have gotten so selfish they're even screwing their own children by leaving them massive debt borrowed to finance our party and our tax cuts. The kids are being forced to pick up the bill, now at nine trillion dollars and rising. Are you having fun yet? Well, I don't really care, because it's all about me, not you! And you're definitely some sort of communist if you ever thought otherwise!

I don't know about you, but I thought once around through junior high was enough for this lifetime. I've never been particularly anxious to relive the experience. Imagine my consternation, therefore, when the George Bushes and Dick Cheneys of the world arrived on the scene to subject us all once again to the nightmare of junior high – this time on steroids, and irradiated like a giant tomato.

It's bad enough when you're twelve, and likely to get whacked by a spit-ball, or smacked down by some devastating verbal cut. If you can imagine taking angry, aggressive kids like that and giving them napalm instead of spit-balls, or John Bolton foaming and snapping at the UN in place of schoolyard taunts, you've got the picture.

Unfortunately, no act of imagination is any longer required. We've been living it.

Hey, we don't even allow freaked-out, immature, mood-swinging, devil-incarnate, little junior high brats to get behind the wheel of a car, let alone drive a country. And for good reason. You know?

So who the hell handed these terminal adolescents keys to the ship of state?



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