

Editors Note: This article is meant to be humorous political satire and does not represent the beliefs of the CJA.

From the Author: Here is a controversial comedy bit I wrote after the 2020 election. It was designed to thoroughly skewer both sides of the political game. But the few test readers I tried it on, though they found it quite funny, felt that it was too harsh on their side of the political divide and not hard enough on the other side! And they were on opposite sides politically! I guess that means I was pretty even handed in my abuse. Anyway, since we are presented with the same two options in 2024, this is the last chance for this piece to be fully relevant—if you dare.

SPIN DOCTORS ANNOTATE THE CHESS CLASSICS

By Bob Basalla

Chapter Three

Paul Morphy vs. The Duke of Brunswick and Count Isouard, Paris, 1858, as annotated by Doctor Whitley Alba of the Chess Partie Patriots and Professor Ebon Schwartz of the Rook-Kings Institution

Dr. Alba: Paul Morphy, one of the superlative geniuses of the game, also exhibited true sportsmanship by being scrupulously honest in all chess affairs: A true testament to the power and majesty of individual achievement. His opponents in this game, conversely, displayed all the ills of the collective: Arrogance combined with a sense of entitlement that by mere fiat they could compete with the elite in any endeavor. The fact that they presumptuously insisted on having this game in an opera box during a public performance of *The Barber of Seville* illustrates this haughty we-know-better-than-you attitude. Morphy genially gave them what they deserved.

Prof. Schwartz: Morphy, a self-admitted amateur, was a typical totalitarian-minded, white, male rube from the boondocks of antebellum Louisiana, only pretending to manners and mores. His true desire was to impose dictatorial will on his chessboard victims, in this case the blameless Duke and Count who, save for the insistence of this boor, would rather have enjoyed the opera *which they undoubtedly paid to attend*. The results of this travesty are still being disputed, nay litigated, down to this very day.

1.e4

Dr. Alba: “Best by test,” expressed one Robert J. Fischer, another of the greatest players ever, in approving of Morphy’s opening choice. “And white wins,” paraphrasing Weaver Adams.

Prof. Schwartz: Morphy predictably avails himself of the “white privilege” of moving first. But that’s only the half of it. Alpha Zero proved this hidebound debut to be distinctly inferior to 1.d4, 1.c4, or even 1.d3. Beginning with at most the fourth best move hardly testifies to Morphy’s “brilliance.” And as Breyer observed decades ago, after 1.e4 “White’s game is in its last throes.”

1...e5

Dr. Alba: An unoriginal, copy-cat response. Dare we allege plagiarism?

Prof. Schwartz: Tit for tat. What’s good for the goose is good for

the gander, and all that. From the get-go the Allies give laudable credence to the concept of equality.

2.d3

Dr. Alba: A sane, sensible and conservative approach to the position.

Prof. Schwartz: A stale, hackneyed, and frankly elitist continuation. Who but the uber-rich have a stable of steeds they can readily employ?

2...d6

Dr. Alba: The dubious duo chooses an inferior response to Morphy’s ideal play as evidenced by this opening rarely seen in modern grandmaster praxis.

Prof. Schwartz: Pawns are the workers, the everyman, the very soul of chess, so naturally, in solidarity with the rank and file, our two woke noblemen select this auspicious debut. It’s The Philidor, stupid!

3.d4

Dr. Alba: A bold and vigorous thrust, staking out the best available, unoccupied lot in the toniest of centralized neighborhoods.

Prof. Schwartz: A grasping, greedy, no-bid usurping of prime real estate, typical of so-called “free marketeers.”

3...g4

Dr. Alba: Crossing the border into Morphy’s homeland without so much as a visa, and disguised as a man of the cloth, no less.

Prof. Schwartz: A peace envoy holding back White’s aggressively placed cavalry. As to charges that this piece is “undocumented,” I refer you to the published game score.

4.dxe5

Dr. Alba: Urban renewal of the central district begins with the eminent (or should I say imminent?) domain demolition of an unsightly slum.

Prof. Schwartz: A reckless escalation of the conflict akin to later tyrants’ unprovoked thrusts into peace (and piece) loving Russia.

4...dxf3

Dr. Alba: A clerical error of the first order. At best this can be termed cross-state terrorism.

Prof. Schwartz: An unfortunate necessity, but miter-heads won’t be required in the chessboard world order to come after the game’s inevitable fundamental transformation.

5.gxf3

Dr. Alba: White asserts his inalienable Right of Recapture as

<p>constitutionally codified in the Rules of Chess.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: An abuse of the recapture privilege, if there ever was one. A player must always go through a court to potentially recover damages.</p> <p>5...dxe5</p> <p>Dr. Alba: As I have always said, a player has no automatic Right of Recapture without filing suit with the appropriate magistrate.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: I have been abundantly consistent on this point; any player has an absolute Right of Recapture in retaliation to offensive actions by the opponent. No ifs, ands, or buts.</p> <p>6.dxc4</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Morphy takes a scholarly approach to winning this already won game.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: An egregious violation of all social norms, forcing religious orthodoxy on the Allies, not to mention a mating attempt without consent.</p> <p>6...dxf6</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Since the Duke and Count's previous play has been indistinguishable from random choice, it is by sheer luck that they avoid the subtle and profound tactic set up by our hero.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Although in principle we favor assisted suicide, that is a procedure to be applied to others in other circumstances.</p> <p>7.♖b3</p> <p>Dr. Alba: This exceedingly fine, two-tined fork (f7 and b7) should have compelled immediate resignation had the Duke and Count any sense of dignity.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Cynically exploiting a woman for the purposes of rank aggression. Note too, the hypocrisy of Morphy who brazenly violates his most famous dictum: Never move any piece twice until you have moved every piece once.</p> <p>7...♗e7</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Cowardly hiding behind the skirts of a woman to do their dirty work. To wit, angling for an exchange of queens to short circuit Morphy's irresistible assault.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: An empowering, not exploiting, move for a piece identifying as female.</p> <p>8.dxc3</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Morphy brilliantly refuses the b7 bribe that his materialist opponents fully expected him to take. It is what they would have done had they been in one of Morphy's many shoes, after all. His game is more transcendent than that.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Snubbing the b7 offering as what's one more pawn to one who has millions? Or billions?</p> <p>8...c6</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Another fatal weakening by the Duke and Count, or should I say the Philidorks? Their error is to be compounded with the following move.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: The lowly masses are an integral part of black's game, unlike class snob Morphy who hasn't employed a "soul of</p>	<p>the game" since move four. In fact, his play would remain "soulless" for the duration.</p> <p>9.dg5</p> <p>Dr. Alba: The bishop sets out for missionary work, putting the question to the heathen opponent's idle idol: The pin being mightier than the sword.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Morphy, racist that he is (remember he came from slave holding territory, after all), continues his policy of moving only <i>white</i> pieces, piously supported by clergy, naturally. (Editor's note: the Rook-Kings Institution has long advocated canceling Paul Morphy's name and games from chess history books for the above reasons.)</p> <p>9...b5</p> <p>Dr. Alba: One blunder leads to the next, doubling down on stupid. The disloyal opposition organizes their community to its ultimate ruin and lies to themselves about it.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: The uprising of the proletariat finally begins, turning the tables forever. Who can doubt that ultimate victory is assured, barring treachery, of course?</p> <p>10.dxb5</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Immediately taking miscreants into custody is the best way to stem riotous action.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Cavalierly wasting lives to bust up the peon union. And as ever, the consequences of sacs policy fall disproportionately on the lower classes. Who can deny their counterattack was a legal and moral response to previous white oppression? Black pawns matter!</p> <p>10...cxb5</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Typical materialism in direct defiance of the facts on the ground. Better was 10...♗b4+ finally admitting the error of their ways, with some miniscule hope of repentance and redemption in a bad ending. Heck, we would hardly have known of this game had Morphy's opponents been more rational in their moves.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Forcing a 50% decline in the white equine population, irreparably damaging the board's limited ecology by changing the game's climate forever. Where are the regulators?</p> <p>11.dxb5+</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Morphy emphatically asserts his constitutional right to bare kings.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Rendering even more citizens of the 64 disenfranchised, discarded and boardless. Morphy heartlessly continues his soulless policy.</p> <p>11...dxd7</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Circling beasts around their vulnerable leader, similar to the behavior of a herd of threatened yaks, only not as intelligently implemented.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Now that the attack has been blunted, Morphy should save face by resigning here. But no, he's stuck on stupid.</p> <p>12.0-0-0</p> <p>Dr. Alba: A place for every king and every king in its place. White safeguards his most valuable possession instead of expecting</p>
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<p>others to save him from himself.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: How is it fair that these two, and <i>only</i> these two, pieces can move at the same time? Shouldn't any two other pieces have the equal opportunity to share the same right?</p> <p>12...♖d8</p> <p>Dr. Alba: More yak circling. The nobles finish assembling a "safe space" for their thumb sucking king to cower in as he can't deal with the ominous events occurring on the other side, particularly Morphy's shish kebab bishops skewering ebony horse flesh against the bound to abdicate Royals.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Investing in a far sighted five move plan to turn back the invader. The success of this strategy will be confirmed five steps hence when the battle indeed comes to a conclusion.</p> <p>13.♖xg7</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Morphy invokes the Castle Doctrine in eliminating the black knight. True, the menacing steed was one file over and six squares up from his king's c1 gated community, and was pinned, but one can never be too careful about preempting such obvious threats to life and property.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: The nuclear option viciously dropped on a defenseless, tethered animal reeks of desperation. Morphy attempts to buy his way to a win via a capitalistic purchase of tenuous time for masonry solid material, irresponsibly ballooning his deficit to unsupportable proportions.</p> <p>13...♖xg7</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Had this been a football field instead of a chess board a flag would have been thrown here for unnecessary roughness in retaliation for a blatantly legal play. Black misuses the Right of Recapture once again by opting for the grossly disproportionate nuclear option.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Morphy's violent play will not be confused with any micro-aggression. Here he risked widening the conflict, perhaps even spreading the capturing contagion to other nearby boards. In some sense Morphy is forcing both side's actions. It's all <i>his</i> fault, modern politics being the art of assigning blame.</p> <p>14.♖d1</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Morphy's full employment policy comes to its ultimate fruition as the last idle unit gets a meaningful job.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: White widens the war by conscripting a piece peacefully living out its life in the h1 hinterlands. If only it had decided to head for Canada to avoid this unconscionable draft.</p> <p>14...♗e6</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Affirmative action by gender instead of selecting the best piece for the job based on qualifications.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Even at this late date the Allies are still willing to pursue a peaceful ending to the conflict inflicted upon them. A draw is more than generous terms considering all the mayhem that Morphy has caused.</p> <p>15.♗xg7+</p> <p>Dr. Alba: White's clerical envoy gets to the bedeviled enemy leader to persuade him to acknowledge the error of his ways, or at least avail himself of last rites.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: The execution of pieces of color without due pro-</p>	<p>cess continues unabated. So, what else is new?</p> <p>15...♗xg7</p> <p>Dr. Alba: So much for the other side's lip service respect for tolerance of religion.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Our side tolerates full freedom of moves for either party, just not moves that in our view engender <i>hate</i> such as Morphy's previous. Future rules committees will hear our briefs. Until then, sure and swift retaliation is the only recourse thrust upon us.</p> <p>16.♗b8+</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Her Majesty displays supreme altruism in sacrificing herself for a higher cause, made palatable by a promise of reward in the chess box afterlife.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Misogynist in the extreme! A woman is forced to throw herself on the burning woodpile at the behest of a male-dominated society.</p> <p>16...♗xg7</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Black's sixteenth consecutive blunder may be some kind of record. Infinitely better was 16...Black resigns.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Taking stock here, I don't see why black was not declared the winner. The Allies are decisively up in point count (28 to 18) with no hope of Morphy being able to recoup the deficit.</p> <p>17.♖d8++</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Culminating Morphy's brilliant strategy, executing the death penalty on black's partie boss, soon to be followed by individual judgements from Caissa herself for the enemy's many sins. And Morphy's castle stands to be canonized (or ought we say cannonized?) for its part in the immortal denouement.</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: Black was literally rooked out of this game by a combination of a castle (for white's use only, mind you) aided by reactionary "godly" special interests. A travesty all around and an imposed injustice favoring the white supremacist minority.</p> <p>Wrap up</p> <p>Dr. Alba: Although White rightfully prevailed in this tilt, many other first movers have been wronged: Paulsen against that unsportsmanlike pseudo-genius Paul Morphy (New York, 1857), Lewitzky against Marshall (Breslau, 1912), Rotlevi against Rubinstein (Lodz, 1907) and D. Byrne against Fischer (New York, 1956) to cite a few. We at Chess Partie Patriots endeavor to correct the record in these and many other wrongly decided games, so we can Make Chess Great Again!</p> <p>Prof. Schwartz: We demand a special counsel to examine Morphy v. Duke of Brunswick et.al. to investigate charges of Russian kibitzing interference in the course of this game. In the meantime, we will continue to seek justice for pieces of color in other far-flung cases throughout chess history, including but not exclusively: That serial offender Adolf Anderssen in his atrocities wrought upon Kieseritzky, London, 1851, and Dufresne, Berlin, 1852, as well as Blackburne (against Zukertort, London, 1883) Von Bardeleben (against Steinitz Hastings, 1895) and many other victims. We will never stop fighting to overturn these and other unjust results. Forward!</p>
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