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## CALL FOR PAPERS

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# CULTURE & ITS DISCONTENTS: FROM SELFIES TO COMMUNITY

At the center of postmodern culture is a paradox: What Christopher Lasch analyzed as *The Culture of Narcissism* (1979) that celebrates an individual's unbounded subjectivity, found an unlikely ally in what Mark Milke calls *The Victim Cult* (2021) that focuses on past grievances while forsaking the future. Both Hitler and Stalin thought of themselves as "victims." Their paranoia stoked fascist and communist totalitarian dictatorships punctuated by Nazi concentration camps and the Soviet Gulag chronicled by Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn. In post-World War II U.S., racial, ethnic and gender preferences had unintended consequences. Beneficiaries who succeeded due to talent and effort would have done so without preferences, while those less-prepared often faced higher education's revolving door. As contributors to *A Dubious Expediency* (2021) conclude, such preferences damage higher education, lowering standards, resulting in demands for further leveling, and silencing of independent voices via political correctness. But the major deleterious consequence of preferences is the retribalization of American society and resulting identity politics which now divide the Republic along ancient tribal, non-negotiable, lines. John McWhorter claims in *Woke Racism* (2021) that the "Elect"--self-styled gurus who demand uncompromising racial consciousness of victimhood from blacks and whites alike--propagate a new "religion" that has betrayed black America. The question arises: Can individuals and groups in 21<sup>st</sup>-century America find common ground, renewing the culture and civil society as the precondition for community and a more perfect Union?

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**JIS** **Mss. Deadline: January 15, 2024.** Send 1 electronic file (MS Word or RTF), including ca. 150-175 word Abstract, typed, double-spaced, in-text citation format via e-mail attachment + 1 Both-Sided copy of: 15-25 page mss. (ca. 5,000-7,500 words), author identification on a separate sheet (with postage for mss. return/SASE) to: Dr. O. Gruenwald, **JIS** Editor, Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, 1065 Pine Bluff Drive, Pasadena, CA 91107, USA. Early mss. submissions recommended. Web site: <https://www.jis3.org>. E-mail: [info@jis3.org](mailto:info@jis3.org).