

# Ethics Alarms

MAY 19, 2012 · 12:55 AM

## The Significance of “Pow Wow Chow”



Great title, by the way....

There is mostly bad ethics news for Elizabeth Warren fans from the [re-discovery of the 1984 cookbook she contributed to called “Pow Wow Chow.”](#) but some good news too. The good news is that the 28 year-old cook book, edited by her cousin and listing the current Harvard professor and Democratic Senate contender as a contributor named “Elizabeth Warren, Cherokee,” shows that Warren didn’t just concoct her claims of Cherokee heritage to achieve minority status to help her get faculty jobs through university diversity hiring policies. Oh, she intentionally employed her dubious heritage credentials to get that edge, no doubt about it. But the cookbook shows that though she was only 1/32 Native American by the most generous calculations and was assuming that lineage on the basis of hearsay alone, Elizabeth Warren really had convinced herself that she is a Cherokee, and probably believes it to this day. Hence her obsession with being able to call herself a Native American appears less opportunistic and more, well, [nuts](#). [ Note: for a thorough though excessively sympathetic review of Warren’s claims, read [this](#), in *The Atlantic*.]

In fact, it looks like a severe case of Sixties Liberal Delusion Syndrome, also known as [Billy Jack Disease](#). Warren talks and writes like a stereotype campus liberal, and like her Sixties campus forbears, she must have figured out in early adulthood that kinship with oppressed minorities is the antidote to white guilt

and the ticket to a perpetual state of self-righteousness and victimization. If my diagnosis is correct, Warren's lockstep liberal mindset seized upon her family lore about American Indian heritage, and installed it as a cornerstone of her self-image as a foe of the capitalist, white-dominated American power structure. I am sorry I doubted her; I now think it is likely that she has long thought of herself as a true Cherokee. True, I think that is *ridiculous*; I think extending that attenuated minority identification into a resume enhancement, allowing her to displace more deserving candidates, is indefensible; and I think her obsession calls her judgement and stability into question. But at least she wasn't lying. About *that*.

Yes, this is the *good* news.

The bad news is that Warren's contributions to the cookbook appear to be misrepresented and stolen. [The report, published on Breitbart, seems to be thoroughly researched:](#)

*"Boston radio talk show host Howie Carr released evidence that appears to confirm Ms. Warren may have plagiarized at least three of the five recipes she submitted to the 1984 Pow Wow Chow cookbook edited by her cousin Candy Rowsey.*

*"Two of the possibly plagiarized recipes, said in the Pow Wow Chow cookbook to have been passed down through generations of Oklahoma Native American members of the Cherokee tribe, are described in a New York Times News Service story as originating at Le Pavilion, a fabulously expensive French restaurant in Manhattan. The dishes were said to be particular favorites of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and Cole Porter.*

*"The two recipes, 'Cold Omelets with Crab Meat' and 'Crab with Tomato Mayonnaise Dressing,' appear in an article titled 'Cold Omelets with Crab Meat,' written by Pierre Franey of the New York Times News Service that was published in the August 22, 1979 edition of the Virgin Islands Daily News [Update: The more likely source is Franey's 1979 book, "The New York Times 60 Minutes Gourmet," which also included the recipes.]..Ms. Warren's 1984 recipe for Crab with Tomato Mayonnaise Dressing is a word-for-word copy of Mr. Franey's 1979 recipe.*

*"Mrs. Warren's 1984 recipe for Cold Omelets with Crab Meat contains all four of the ingredients listed in Mr. Franey's 1979 recipe in the exact same portion but lists five additional ingredients. More significantly, her instructions are virtually a word for word copy of Mr. Franey's instructions from this 1979 article...with one exception. Ms. Warren says, 'Let cook until firm and lightly brown...' and Mr. Franey says "Let cook until firm and lightly browned..."*

*"The third potentially plagiarized recipe, 'Herbed Tomatoes,' appears to be copied from [a] 1959 recipe from Better Homes and Garden."*

Warren was 35 in 1984; this isn't a teenaged Mitt Romney hazing an effeminate classmate. Plagiarizing copyrighted recipes to include in a book sold for profit is serious plagiarism, and these instances carry the stench of fraud as well. The book was sold as including authentic Native American recipes passed down through generations. The recipes Warren purloined were, instead, the creations of a famous French restaurant and an excerpt from a typical middle America homemaker magazine.

You can make your own decision about how much plagiarizing recipes 28 years ago should be held against Elizabeth Warren today. Massachusetts, where James Michael Curley reigned, has never been especially picky about the character of its elected officials. Warren would have to have a lot more skeletons in her wigwam than what has surfaced so far to approach the black marks on the early record of the late Senator whose seat she is seeking, Ted Kennedy.

As for me, a Massachusetts kid myself, I don't trust plagiarizers. The most honest and trustworthy people I know never plagiarized anything in their lives; given a choice between a plagiarist and a non-plagiarist, I'll take the non- every time. I think the bad news emanating from "Pow Wow Chow" is that when you start with Warren's willingness to exploit her distant Native American heritage even if it meant displacing other more deserving candidates, stir in her self-evident lie that she only listed herself as a Native American to find other Cherokees in that hotbed of Native American social life, Boston, and top it off with the Pow Wow Chow plagiarism, you get a recipe for a politician who is willing to lie, cheat, and manipulate to get what she wants.

Personally, I think we have too many of those already.

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**Facts:** [Breitbart](#)

**Source:** [Boston Herald](#)

**Graphic:** [All Things Cherokee](#)

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In "Character"

## 29 responses to “*The Significance of “Pow Wow Chow”*”

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### **bugzinthehood**

May 19, 2012 at 6:57 am



This is hysterically funny. I know that every chef and cookbook “borrows” other recipes, but the idea of the great cooks of the Cherokee nation whipping up some mayonnaise makes me ROFLMAO. Of course they might have need it for an 18th century BLT, buffalo, lettuce and tomato.

If you want to faithfully adapt one of Elizabeth Warren’s recipes for chocolate cake, make the following adjustment

1/32 tablespoon flour

1/32 tablespoon unsweetened chocolate

1/32 tablespoon sugar

1/32 teaspoon butter, etc., etc., etc.

[Reply](#)

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### **Mike Martin**

May 19, 2012 at 9:44 am



The logistics are the hard part for me. Maybe someone could explain for the more dense amongst us just how, all those many generations ago, the Oklahoma tribes of the Cherokee Nation got their hands on crab meat to begin with. Oklahoma is a long way from any significant body of saltwater, but what do I know?

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[Reply](#)

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### **kreshon**

May 19, 2012 at 2:54 pm



The Cherokee used to live in Georgia and the Carolinas. They were sent west in various relocations, most famously the trail of tears.

That said, the recipes are certainly not authentic Cherokee.

[Reply](#)

**Jack Marshall**

May 19, 2012 at 4:10 pm

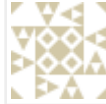


Yes, I'd say that's a fair conclusion.

[Reply](#)

**janpchapman**

May 19, 2012 at 8:39 pm



After reading descriptions of the book, it doesn't appear to represent itself as containing recipes of the Cherokee, but simply recipes submitted by persons of Cherokee heritage. I know there has been wide discussion of what constitutes that heritage, so that remains an arguable point. Also, I think there is some discussion of what constitutes plagiarism of a recipe. Some seem to think that even changing one ingredient means it was not plagiarized—I will leave that to the legal experts. I know that recipes are fiddled with and passed around (and yes, printed in cookbooks) without attribution all the time.

Both the recipe kerfuffle and the bullying incident are insignificant, in my view. One is recipes, for heaven's sake, and the other happened decades ago. What matters is which candidate, Warren or Brown, Romney or Obama, is going to look out for the little guy after they're elected.

[Reply](#)

**Jack Marshall**

May 19, 2012 at 9:01 pm



Rationalization on rationalization, Jan!! What matters, always, is who is trustworthy. "Looking out for the little guy" isn't so honorable when you have a record of faking being the little guy. That cookbook stunt would get a Harvard student kicked out of school. Verbatim using of someone else's work is wrong, and the mark of a fraud.

[Reply](#)

**janpchapman**

May 19, 2012 at 10:47 pm



I believe it's been stated that the recipes were not verbatim, that there were minor changes. I also believe that holding someone down and cutting his hair while

making anti-gay remarks is also “always wrong,” and the mark of a bully. Indeed, character matters. As to whether Elizabeth Warren is faking is also debatable. She believes she is 1/32 Cherokee. The only difference I can see in whether one thinks these acts offensive enough to eliminate a person from holding office is whether you like the person or not, or agree with his or her policies. Therefore, they cancel each other out. What’s left is how you feel they would act once in office.

[Reply](#)

### **Steven Mark Pilling**

May 19, 2012 at 10:58 pm



That’s an old ploy, Jan. You’re trying to moderate an exposed character flaw in one person by citing an allegation against another who’s of the “wrong” political ilk. If Mz. Warren actually believes that her own alleged, distant ancestor was an American Indian and that this somehow makes her special, then that only compounds the case against her. Either she’s devious, an opportunist, just plain bonkers or a combination thereof. Nor does it matter how one “feels” about how another might act in office. Feel, hell! Look to facts, not feelings.

[Reply](#)

### **Jack Marshall**

May 19, 2012 at 11:05 pm



17, Jan. That means a kid. My statement on this is clearly articulated in the post about it. Nobody should be judged on the basis of juvenile conduct while at a prep school almost 50 years ago. It is meaningless. Warren was 35 when she appropriated the recipe—that shows a willingness to cheat, and adult character. Being a jerk when you were a teenager shows you were a teenager. The two incidents are not similar in weight or probity in any way. It should have nothing to do with “whether you like the person” at all. The issue is fairness and objectivity. No sane job interviewer asks about the stupid things a college grad did in high school, including cheating. Bullying people and cheating in one’s 30’s is entirely different.

As I said, I’m not certain Warren is faking, but I am sure she used a dubious claim to cut in line. And I think her obsession with representing herself as a Native American suggests that a screw is loose somewhere.

[Reply](#)

### **Steven Mark Pilling**



May 19, 2012 at 9:47 pm



In summary: Character Matters.

[Reply](#)

## Jack Marshall

May 19, 2012 at 11:07 pm



I read Jan to say that character only matters if you don't like them. It matters, with no reservations. But using teenage episodes of jerkism to impugn an adult's character is itself *indicia* of flawed character.

[Reply](#)

## Steven Mark Pilling

May 19, 2012 at 11:11 pm

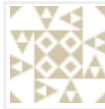


Actually, I wrote that before Jan chimed in. But it's relevant to her remarks, too.

[Reply](#)

## janpchapman

May 20, 2012 at 1:22 am



Wow. Now my character is impugned because I think that being a bully in high school says something about your character. I suppose you are aware that mistreating animals as a young child indicates something is wrong, but mistreating a human being when you're seventeen gets a pass. Both these people have shown character flaws. It is you who are rationalizing. You do not want Elizabeth Warren to become a senator, and I can understand that, because she would promote policies that you disagree with. I do not want Mitt Romney to become President because he would promote policies I disagree with. Therefore, I am biased, and so are you both. I think I am being generous by equating copying recipes and physically assaulting a fellow student and calling it even. There shouldn't even be a discussion.

[Reply](#)

## Jack Marshall

May 20, 2012 at 2:23 am



Well, take your pick, character or reasoning. No, bullying in high school,

absent demonstration of related adult proclivities, says nothing at all about current character, and you yourself would not want to be judged by your most ill-considered act as a teen. Killing animals is sadism and pathological conduct that does point to psychopathy; hazing and related conduct among young males is not atypical and is predictive of nothing at all, unless it bis habitual, repeated, and continues into adulthood.

My analysis of Warren is *exactly* what it would be of any politician of any party, or any ideology who behaved similarly—you will search in vain on this site to find me defending or ignoring dubious conduct like Warren’s because of any partisan preference. I am on record, over and over and over again, as believing that demonstrated character should trump political positions in elections for public office, and I have never wavered from that. That’s a scurrilous accusation, and one, by the way, that is specifically banned in the Comment Guidelines. I wrote about Romney’s abuse of his dog years before most journalists did—look it up. That was when he *was* an adult, and I think its ominous—not disqualifying, but still worthy of attention. I wrote that the right’s use of Obama’s dog-eating anecdote in response was unfair, which it was. You, among others, can look to me as a role model of someone who does NOT calibrate criticism according to who I want to see succeed or not, and as someone who absurdly wants to use a 48 year-old, teenage, school campus episode to impugn the character of a distinguished public servant, you surely need one. You are certainly *not* being generous to compare the conduct of a college professor with that of a high school student. Only bias, dishonesty or insanity could excuse or explain that.

[Reply](#)

**Steven Mark Pilling**

May 20, 2012 at 9:25 am



For myself, I’ve poked a lot of wry humor at Obama for his “Dog Day Afternoon”. (I thought that cartoon of Obama working on a wok bowl, with Michelle telling him angrily, “I told you to WALK the dog” was hilarious!) But I’ve rarely seen anything beyond the humor you’d ordinarily expect at a past curiosity in the life of a public figure. I’m not familiar at all about this alleged cruelty to a dog by Romney. But I DO recall the overblown reaction to Johnson lifting his beagle by the ears. Americans are still a nation of fervent dog lovers!



## janpchapman

May 20, 2012 at 10:41 am



I'll leave it at this. You can vote for the guy who physically and verbally assaulted a fellow student who was homosexual when he was 17, then went on to run for political office on a campaign of withholding certain civil rights from homosexuals, and forced a foreign policy expert off his staff who happened to be a homosexual, or you can vote for the other guy.

You can vote for the woman who exaggerated her minority status to take advantage of an affirmative action policy to advance her career, then modified recipes that were published in a cookbook and claimed them as her own, then went on to become a hero of consumer protections. Or you can vote for the other guy.

It's the policies.

## Steven Mark Pilling

May 20, 2012 at 10:54 am



Your entire basis of thought, Jan, is obviously your fanatic loyalty to the absurd concept of homosexuals as a “downtrodden minority” who must be catered to thereby. It reduces your entire train of vision to a single, delapidated track. I reject that notion utterly, as have the American people in every statewide election. Perverts are not a minority, Jan. They're a mental derangement. If Romney understands that (and I doubt he does) the more power to him.

## Jack Marshall

May 20, 2012 at 11:22 am



“It's the policies” is the rationalization that led voters to elect Nixon and Clinton, Marion Barry, Mayor Dailey, James Michael Curley, Charley Rangel and many others despite clear and convincing evidence that they couldn't be trusted. A more discredited and cynical political philosophy would be hard to find.

*This comment—“You can vote for the guy who physically and verbally assaulted a fellow student who was homosexual when he was 17, then went on to run for political office on a campaign of*

*withholding certain civil rights from homosexuals, and forced a foreign policy expert off his staff who happened to be a homosexual, or you can vote for the other guy” is so manifestly dishonest and/or ill-informed that it takes my breath away.*

Romney’s victim may have been gay, but there is no evidence Romney knew he was gay or assaulted him because of that, not that its any worse to assault someone for being gay than for any other reason. To say that Romney is “on a campaign of withholding certain civil rights from homosexuals’ is flat out false—this is not a theme in his campaign, and the President doesn’t decide the issue anyway. Nor do opponents of gay marriage concede that being able to marry is a civil right (I disagree, vehemently). The issue has not been decided, and *you* can not decide it. There is absolutely no evidence that Romney “forced out” his gay aide. Romney hired him. He also should have publicly condemned the bigots calling for the aide to leave, but that is NOT the same as personally forcing him out. The aide resigned, as I would have in his place.

## Steven Mark Pilling

May 20, 2012 at 10:48 am



That’s moral relativity. AND you’re making the common liberal assumption that conservatives think and are motivated just like you, but are less honest about it for reasons of political gain. That’s something you can relate to. But it’s also false and conceived in your own arrogance.

First; I’m not a citizen of Massachusetts. Second; I’m not Scott Brown’s biggest admirer. Third; I’m not Mitt Romney’s greatest admirer, either. Fouth; I’m motivated primarily by a candidate’s character and respect for American values, not any gain for myself. That’s an old fashioned attitude known as “citizenship”.

[Reply](#)

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## Steven Mark Pilling

May 19, 2012 at 2:41 pm



Billy Jack Disease in truth! I remember how that actor (Tom Whatshisname) built his entire, short film career on that stupid character and then, many years later, ran for the Democrat Presidential

nomination on that basis. That “Indian” delusion was practically endemic in certain areas back during the sixties and seventies. I recall how I was once sharing a beer with a guy near a college campus; a fellow veteran who happened to be an Apache. Some weird little dude I’d seen around before came up to the table and tried to buddy up to him, claiming to be a Seminole. He looked about as Amerind as Lady Warren does! My buddy told him to get lost, naturally enough. After the jerk had stumbled off, I could only remark, “Where do they come from?”. He just shrugged and we got back to drinking. It helps sometimes...

[Reply](#)

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## Elizabeth

May 20, 2012 at 11:17 am



Rambling response to a rambling bunch of other responses,

Junior- and high-school “bullying” is a loaded term. Was I a bully in high school because I joined an elite sorority and basically eschewed interaction with girls who were not members? Am I “forgiven” because I purposefully chose a college that did NOT have sororities and fraternities? Does this prove I learned something about morals and ethics and snobbery from my high school experience or does it prove that, at age 16/17 my basic moral outlook was set and I can never live it down?

It’s true that my father was of Welsh extraction and my mother’s family fled the Russian revolution in 1916. As luck would have it, neither of these would allow me any special treatment in the US in the 21st century or any previous ones. I suppose I could also state that my 7-greats back grandfather was also a pirate, Captain John \_\_\_\_\_ (years ago listed in Colliers Encyclopedia), one of our Welsh forebears who eventually repented and became a Methodist under John Wesley in Maryland? Unfortunately for me, I suppose, that pirates were and are not a “protected class,” and no one has bothered to put together a “Pirates’ Cookbook.” But does that part of my way-past background have any impact on me today? The fact that native Americans ARE considered a protected class, and that being 1/32nd Cherokee for some odd reason means something to someone, only means to me that Ms. Warren is taking unfair advantage of her very mixed, very old heritage. We are a nation of immigrants (and native Americans), who have (pardon me) interbred and become just plain Americans, regardless of their surnames. Take the case of Nomar Garciaparra when he was with the Red Sox: some moron asked him to translate for a recent Spanish-speaking member of the team. His answer: The Garciaparras have been in the US for five generations: I don’t know a word of Spanish!

As for Romney and his dog: there is a big difference between stupidity in one’s treatment of a pet and animal cruelty. Drop it. Early animal cruelty is often a harbinger of later sociopathic behavior. Prove that with Romney. Also that his teenage “pranks” are unforgivable and worthy of great discussion now. If Romney is to be judged on his teenage behavior, then I assume most of our presidents — who were never vetted the way they are now — would never have been elected, purely on the basis of their adolescent behavior.

[Reply](#)

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## Karl Penny

May 20, 2012 at 12:06 pm



Is it at all relevant that if the Romney incident went down in the worst-case scenario (I assume that that 50 year-old recollections might be less than 100% accurate), it would not, in the context of the day, have been regarded as much of a big deal? Simply put, bullying wasn’t regarded as a major problem in the mid-60’s, and Romney and his buddies would have more likely been regarded as having pulled a prank, than having bullied anyone. I’m just asking.

Reply

## Jack Marshall

May 20, 2012 at 1:23 pm



Yes, it does matter, which is why in the follow-up post I pronounce my friend Rick Jones guilty of retroactive ethical sentencing. That kind of garbage was standard issue back then, and the fact that we no longer look at it as “boys will be boys” doesn’t change the fact that this is the culture it occurred in. It is like calling Abraham Lincoln and George Washington racists, in the same sense that we use the term today.

Reply

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## Michael

May 21, 2012 at 11:55 pm



Well, I must confess that I stole the Boone family secret stew recipe, but I would never publish it. I haven’t even written it down. I helped some of the Boones make the stew and I just figured it out. When I moved away, I started making it for myself and my friends. I always give credit for the stew, even though I make some substitutions (squirrel is inconvenient). Food is a creative exercise. Recipes are like ideas. Even if you don’t use them verbatim, you still should cite them. These weren’t her dishes and she passed them off as her’s (or her family’s). It doesn’t matter if she completely reworded them, they were somebody else’s just like that stew recipe isn’t mine.

As for “Pow wow chow”, I would expect more fry bread and Indian Tacos, but it also reminds me of a story my history teacher, Mr. Garringer once told me. As a teenager, he was on Cherokee land in Oklahoma when he came upon some old men with a pot of stew. They offered him some and he ate it. When he went to scoop some more, one of the men said “Dig deep, there’s a dog’s head in the bottom.” He said he didn’t know if it was true or if they were pulling his leg. I think the cookbook would be

worth a look if that stew recipe was right next to the ones from Elizabeth Warren.

[Reply](#)

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