

# The New Criterion

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## Intellectual malpractice

by Mark Falcoff

Paul Hollander *From Benito Mussolini to Hugo Chavez: Intellectuals and a Century of Political Hero Worship* by

### BOOKS IN THIS ARTICLE



Paul Hollander

*From Benito Mussolini to Hugo Chavez: Intellectuals and a Century of Political Hero Worship*

Cambridge University Press, 338 pages, \$29.99

When I picked up Paul Hollander's new book *From Benito Mussolini to Hugo Chávez* for review I had in mind the visit of then-Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Columbia University in 2007. Prior to his appearance there was some pushback from (unnamed ethnic) wealthy alumni, which led President Lee Bollinger, having already extended the invitation, to denounce suddenly (and unexpectedly) the guest while introducing him. In his remarks, the Iranian president did not disappoint: during his oration he checked all the boxes, including the inevitable attempt at Holocaust denial. Afterwards there was some discussion in the media about whether the invitation was appropriate at all. John Coatsworth, the pompous dean of Columbia's School of International Affairs, rose to defend his school. As he explained to the press, he himself would have had no problem inviting Adolf...

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