

The Cultural Left's Cold War on Christianity



By Steven Yates

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A Transgender Day of Visibility.

Recently we were handed a choice Bidenista treat: a [declaration](#) of a Transgender Day of Visibility that just happened to fall on Easter Sunday.

Conservative Christians were pretty upset, some calling it blasphemous and satanic.

The leftist response: a condescending “every March 31 at least since 2010” (summary of the history [here](#), with tweets, etc.) has been a Transgender Day of Visibility, while Easter Sunday moves around so as to fall on Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox. Respondents also stated that Joe Biden is a “devout Catholic” as if that meant anything these days.

Were we supposed to be paying attention to every shenanigan these people have instituted since “progressives” started getting progressively more lunatic?

March 31 has been “Transgender Day of Visibility” that long? Apparently [this is true](#) and not fake news, though the Bidenista *choice of words* makes it *sound* like something Sleepy Joe’s handlers just cooked up:

Today, we send a message to all transgender Americans: You are

loved. You are heard. You are understood. You belong. You are America, and my entire Administration and I have your back.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 31, 2024, as Transgender Day of Visibility. I call upon all Americans to join us in lifting up the lives and voices of transgender people throughout our Nation and to work toward eliminating violence and discrimination based on gender identity.

No references there to any past proclamations. Can you blame Christians for thinking this was a novel affront?

This is, after all, the most left wing White House in U.S. history: in the *cultural* sense of *left*, not the *economic* sense (the difference is substantial). The culture lurched left during the 1990s, but the 1990s were sane compared to the New Normal!

Leftists act as if Christians are universally a bunch of stupid and backward rubes who didn't know that Easter moves around. This adds insult to insult, something the woke mob excels at, and which the Bidenista regime serves whenever possible.

Turn this around! Knowing in advance that Easter fell on March 31 this year, and that Christians reserve the day to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ Our Lord and Savior, the Bidenistas *could* have moved their celebration of secularist gender fluidity back or forward a week. It would have been a nice gesture.

Wolves don't make nice gestures, however.

The Larger Effort to Remove Christianity from Society.

This is just the latest volley in a much larger effort, that

of cultural leftists and secularists more broadly, to remove the Christian worldview from visibility and end its capacity to influence the public conversation.

These efforts go back over a century, starting conceivably with the tensions Darwinism provoked, leading to the Scopes trial and the realization by a few theologians (e.g. J. Gresham Machen, author of *Christianity and Liberalism* back in the 1920s) that Christians were being strongarmed into embracing the liberal/materialist/Darwinist outlook. Those who resisted, maintaining that such supernatural events as Christ's Resurrection really happened, were labeled "fundamentalists" and canceled. (Yes, Virginia, "cancel culture" didn't begin yesterday, either.)

Supreme Court decisions such as *Engel v Vitale* (1962) removed prayer from public schools, using the spurious argument that a morning prayer violates the First Amendment.

What the First Amendment says:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

A morning prayer in a government school hardly "establishes a religion," and it should go without saying, schools are not Congress. Apparently, too, ***prohibiting the free exercise thereof*** was simply ignored.

It is probably true that the Framers didn't envision an age when Federal power would be not just in schools but literally everywhere. Expansionist government, alongside relentless secularization, have combined to enable the cultural left's cold war against Christianity, operating through the courts but hardly exclusively through them.

I call it a *cold war*, because obviously it is a war of *influence*, not *violence*. Christians aren't being physically assaulted in large numbers – yet. We've been seeing efforts to *marginalize*, leaving Christian denominations intact.

Leftists thus have *plausible deniability*. They can laugh at their Christian critics and point to all those churches standing on street corners in every Southern city and town.

What they can't do is point to many influential Christian scholars in major universities.

To the best of my knowledge, a fellow named Alvin Plantinga is the last remaining Christian philosopher of note, author of books with titles like *Warranted Christian Belief* (2000) and *Where the Conflict Really Lies (Science, Religion, and Naturalism)* (2011).

At age 91, Plantinga is semi-retired at the University of Notre Dame. I am only aware of two other Christian philosopher with university positions (last I knew): Edward Feser, who has criticized the evangelical New Atheism of Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Sam Harris, and others in a book entitled *The Last Superstition* (referring to materialism) (2008); and Francis J. Beckwith, author of *Defending Life* (2007).

While researching this article I did a search for Christian scholars and [this shot to the top](#). Two items are worth noting. (1) No one listed is under 60. Many are in Plantinga's generation. They'll probably be gone in less than ten years. (2) I wonder about someone's status as an adherent to a consistent Christian worldview if he or she declares that it and Darwinism are compatible. If each is properly understood, they are incompatible, and that's all there is to it. One, moreover, Hans Küng, is described as thinking that "all religions are true" which is also not a belief a Christian can hold.

So how many authentic Christian scholars are there in academia? Obviously, I might have missed a few people, but I'd guess-timate that you can count them on your fingers and toes. Very unlike academic leftists, who dominate the philosophy, history, and literature departments in the top-tier universities.

Auguste Comte, the Frankfurt School

Paving the way for scientistic and secularist attacks on the Christian worldview was Auguste Comte, French founder of sociology and originator of the philosophical ideology known as positivism, with his Law of Three Stages. His third and final "stage" was "positive science" as the sole source of intellectual truth. The story is a long one, and I can only direct interested readers to the second and third chapters of my book *What Should Philosophy Do?* (link below).

Most relevant to the Bidenista effort on behalf of a tiny group of probably under .00001 percent of the population is the Frankfurt School who set classical Marxism aside in favor of what some call cultural Marxism – or cultural leftism.

Its architects such as Hungary's Györgi Lukács and Germany's Theodor W. Adorno saw Marx's emphasis on economic relations as short-sighted. They realized: *political economy is downstream from culture*. The prevailing culture of the West was Christian. Thus they turned to psychology, literature, music, art, film, etc., with an eye to "capturing the culture." This meant attacking Christianity at a foundational level. They drew on Freudian psychoanalysis, existentialist literature, sociological studies of the effects of technology on society, and enhanced their criticisms of capitalism in the context of what they called *critical theory*.

They and their students became very good at what they did as they infiltrated universities, the entertainment industry, eventually media empires and other corporations. We can study

how they've weaponized language with invented words like *transphobia* (and its older sibling *homophobia*) and the even more ridiculous *misgendering* someone (e.g., calling men *men* because they have male chromosomes, male DNA, male physiology, even if they are wearing women's swimwear and participating in women's sports).

One of the Frankfurt School's best students, Herbert Marcuse, shifted the emphasis of leftist-liberalism in the U.S. from class to race, and from free speech to calls for controls on speech, in his influential 1965 essay "Repressive Tolerance." Those seeking to understand critical race theory and its doctrine of "equity" (as opposed to equality and equal opportunity) need to study this essay. Political correctness began with Marcuse. By the 1980s his ideas were being applied to women, and by the early 1990s, especially following academic radical feminist Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) we started hearing not about sex, which is biological, but *gender* as a "social construct," meaning something capable of *deconstruction* and *recreation*: the origins of gender fluidity and of transgenderism.

The Christian worldview had already been beaten back via Supreme Court decisions, of course. It had a marginal status before any of these people came along. No one in centers of intellectual influence was listening to Christians. Materialism as the guiding metaphysical ethos of nearly all twentieth century science made the cultural left's cold war on Christianity easier, even if transgenderism tries to deconstruct materialist biology by portraying biological-genetic sexuality as a manifestation of the "patriarchy."

Christians remain, of course, and continue to have influence outside the big cities, intellectual centers, and controlled media institutions. Our definition of *marginal* is to be outside of those and not having their reach, while noting that most of those churches are still there.

If there is any psychological trait that characterizes leftists, though, it is their need to control others *en masse*. Most Christians couldn't care less what the big cities do and have ceased trying to influence them. Leftists who rule those citadels *can't stand it, however, that in Dothan, Ala. (e.g.), there are churchgoers who don't "affirm nonbinary persons" in their midst* (are there any "nonbinary" people in Dothan, Ala.???).

The Declining Influence of Religion.

Today we have solid data on declining religious observances and belief, especially among younger generations, illustrating the success of the cold war on the Christian worldview. According to a Pew Research Center survey, more than three quarters of Americans agree that the role of this worldview in American public life is shrinking, whether they support this change or not. Many would agree that religion's loss of influence is "a bad thing," while 57 percent retain the view that religion has a positive impact on American life.

According to this same study, nearly half of U.S. adults claim they feel "some" tension between their religious beliefs and mainstream culture.

Gallup polls show that for decades now, the percentage of Americans with "no religious affiliation" had increased.

This has become an era of skyrocketing mental health problems, including suicide as one of the leading causes of death in those under 30. The New Normal is an era of school shootings and road rage. There are plenty other signs of a society where stress has risen to dangerous levels, with nothing, no larger sense of purpose, to counteract it.

Leo Tolstoy, the Russian novelist, grew aware of how common people's faith in Providence sustained them. In his day, commoners had far harsher lives than most any of us – some argue, in fact, that with what prosperity we have and with

today's creature comforts, we've never had it better!

But somehow, "our" secularized world doesn't *feel* better. We're plagued with anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, suicidal thoughts, and chemical dependencies. Some "snap" and express their frustration violently.

This is because there's no sense of Highest Purpose which only God can supply, and it gets worse as more and more people (e.g., Gen Z; it might actually be worse for Alphas the oldest of whom are about to enter their teens) grow up and come of age without this sense.

They're not going to get it in their wretched public schools, of course; and they're no longer getting it at home.

Can Christian influence be brought back?

Given the cultural and sociological disasters of recent years – including the "happy nihilist" mindset of "party animals" that sets conditions for horrifying events like [this](#) – and given that many Christians attribute these to the removal of their faith from the public square, the fear that Christianity might make a comeback, or revival, in the form of a new Great Awakening, haunts the left.

Hence talk of "dominionists," a supposed Christian conspiracy aimed at establishing a theocracy. This has about as much chance of happening as flapping our arms and flying to the moon.

Evangelical Christians' support for Donald Trump (although with a few exceptions) has been a mystery to secular leftists. There's no mystery. Had Evangelicals not supported Trump, they would be completely outside the national conversation.

So what do we do?

The truth is, we don't have much to show for *anything* we've done over the past few decades. Secularists / leftists have

continued to advance, even during the Trump years which culminated in the George Floyd riots of 2020.

Too few Christians have tried to frame this as a clash of worldviews. Many have *agreed* with secularists that the only solutions to our problems are political – which means getting “their” people into elected office.

How’s that working out, anyway?

We’re faced with the likelihood that the abortion issue could cost Trump and other Republicans this November. Because a single Supreme Court decision was never going to repeal the death culture, which is a matter of deep-seated worldview belief and practice. Always remember: *politics is downstream from culture, and a culture is downstream from a worldview.*

There is no political solution for the problem of girls and women thinking it okay to kill their unborn children and using phrases like *women’s reproductive rights* or *my body, my choice*. That the latter sentiment never applied to the covid mRNA shots should tell you all you need to know.

The same kind of weaponized language that brought us *homophobic, transphobic, and misgendered*.

I’ve promoted the idea before: *create new, separate institutions that will provide the basis for a parallel culture and a parallel economy: parallel institutions, in other words.*

As I’ve [noted](#), existing higher education can’t be saved. Nor can the big cities nor the corporate leviathans be salvaged.

Christians can only be resourceful and learn to operate outside their confines.

We need to develop a parallel culture, which will include a parallel marketplace and ultimately a parallel financial structure that won’t be abrogated.

That's a tall order, but the only alternative will be if enough Americans decide they actually care about collapsed education, the toxic social media environment, a dysfunctional political order, an economy that redistributes wealth upward, and a decaying culture more broadly. Then there might be some slim hope of fixing at least some of these institutions from the inside.

That's so iffy, however, that pursuing an agenda of separation and independence seems to me the way to go. If that can't be made to work, then nothing will.

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Steven Yates's book *Four Cardinal Errors: Reasons for the Decline of the American Republic* (2011) can be ordered [here](#).

His philosophical work *What Should Philosophy Do? A Theory* (2021) can be obtained [here](#) or [here](#).

His paranormal horror novel *The Shadow Over Sarnath* (2023) can

be gotten [here](#).

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