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Liberty or Islamic Law?

Cover Story

By Kevin Bywater
Summit Oxford Study Centre

"I don't know why anyone would see us as a threat."

As we were driving toward Heathrow, in London, our Sudanese taxi driver, a Muslim, noted how he enjoyed living in Oxford. "It is very peaceful here," he noted. During our conversation I described how our Summit Oxford students read the Qur'an, spend hours reading Hadiths, and meet with an imam.

"Oh," he blurted, "are you familiar with that book about how civilizations clash?"

I was surprised. Could he be alluding to Samuel Huntington's book, *The Clash of Civilizations*?[1] I confessed that I had only read about forty pages and didn't have an opinion. "I don't know why anyone would see us as a threat," he said.

Indeed, why would anyone see this man as a threat? He was an amiable chap with a perpetual smile. I certainly didn't see him as a threat.

We spoke of immigration in Europe, how skilled immigrants are granted jobs, homes, healthcare, education, and other services. Indeed, they are given places to reside in peaceful societies, ones typically more peaceful than their home countries. We observed how immigrants tended to congregate in neighborhoods. I noted that as these populations grew, so did their voice and the significance of their vote.

Then a question came to me. "If you were able to vote to implement Sharia in Oxford, would you?" His smile enlarged and his response was immediate: "Of course, that is our culture, our heritage." This troubled me.

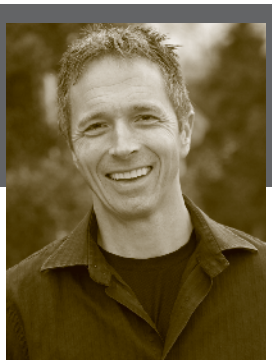
"But if Sharia were implemented," I reasoned, "then the very people who had granted jobs, healthcare, and peaceful residences might find, in turn, that *their* peace and security would be taken away. They would be persecuted or prosecuted if they did not comply with Sharia."

Silence ensued for several minutes. Our driver's smile slowly morphed to a pursed frown. He lifted his sunglasses and placed

See **Sharia**, page 3

from the president's desk

a word from dr. jeff myers



You might have missed this in the news: the new president of Egypt, Mohamed Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, in 2012 led a crowd in a call and response:

Mohamed Morsi: The Koran is our constitution.
Crowds: The Koran is our constitution.
Mohamed Morsi: The Prophet Muhammad is our leader.
Crowds: The Prophet Muhammad is our leader.
Mohamed Morsi: Jihad is our path.
Crowds: Jihad is our path.
Mohamed Morsi: And death for the sake of Allah is our most lofty aspiration.
Crowds: And death for the sake of Allah is our most lofty aspiration.
Mohamed Morsi: Above all — Allah is our goal.

Morsi followed this with a pledge to aggressively implement Sharia law: "The shari'a, then the shari'a, and finally, the shari'a. This nation will enjoy blessing and revival only through the Islamic shari'a …."[1]

The Muslim Brotherhood has a plan for America as well. A strategy document entered into the transcript of a 2007 trial of leaders of the terrorist-supporting Holy Land Foundation, read, in part:

> The Ikhwan [Islamic religious militia] must understand that their work in America is a kind of grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and 'sabotaging' its miserable house by their hands and the hands of the believers so that it is eliminated and God's religion is made victorious over all other religions.[2]

Does the Muslim Brotherhood have the resources to carry out this mission? If they do, will Americans have the moral and political will to resist it?

Christians are not alone in their alarm. Journalist Paul Williams, an unabashed Secularist, is concerned that Islam's growth in America will lead to such strong pockets of influence in certain communities that elected officials will be forced to cede to Muslim demands for implementing Sharia provisions. Williams believes this could happen by 2020.[3]

The pathway into this "Muslim transformation" will be through the gradual implementation of Sharia law, which is the heart of a worldview fundamentally opposed to Christianity:

1. **Islam has a different concept of God.** Unlike the Christian worldview, Islam teaches that God reveals only his law, not himself.[4] The body of laws based on this revelation, Sharia, is seen as divine law, co-eternal with God.[5] Sharia is considered by devout Muslims to be God's direct will. **Bottom line**: Sharia cannot coexist with other governmental structures.

2. **Islam has a different concept of human nature.** Muslim theology does not recognize humans as made in God's image. Humans gain value by obeying the precepts of Sharia and those who refuse must be punished. Sharia calls for the killing of apostates (people who leave Islam) and blasphemers (people who say negative things about Allah or the prophet Muhammad). Marital rape is condoned, amputation of limbs for theft is commanded, and the whipping, selling into slavery, and oppression of non-converts is demanded.[6] **Bottom line**: Sharia cannot coexist with a western conception of human rights.

3. **Islam has a different concept of sin.** America's founders established a separation of powers believing, as Lord Acton said, "Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely."[7] Islam does not share this view; Muslims are much more willing to abide authoritarian government. The Freedom in the World 2013 report lists forty-seven nations that receive a rating of "Not Free."[8] Most of these are Muslim-dominated nations in the Middle East and North Africa. Only 22 percent of Muslim-dominated nations are listed as "free." **Bottom line**: Sharia cannot coexist with a Western conception of freedom.

Sharia law is spreading rapidly and with rare exceptions, people seem incapable of speaking up against it. Whether people wake up before it is too late depends largely on how proponents of democratic freedom respond.

Good news: students at every Summit session this summer are being taught about Islam by Dr. Nabeel Qureshi, a former Muslim who will share his powerful Christian testimony and prepare students to understand and respond to the truth about Islam.

Notes

1. Andrew Bostom, *Sharia Versus Freedom* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2012), p. 44.
2. Mohamed Akram, "An Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America, "May 22, 1991, p. 7.
3. Paul L. Williams, *Crescent Moon Rising* (Amherst, NJ: Prometheus Press, 2013), pp. 25-26.
4. Bostom, p. 73.
5. Malise Ruthven, *Islam: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 86.
6. Lord Acton's letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton (1887). See *John Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, 13th and centennial ed. (Boston, MA: Little Brown and Company 1955), p. 335.
7. See Freedom House's report, "Freedom in the World 2013" at http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FIW%202013%20Booklet%20-%20for%20Web_0.pdf
8. Irshad Manji, *Allah, Liberty and Love* (New York: Free Press, 2011), pp. 144-145.

sharia

continued from page one

them on his furrowed brow. He tipped his head to the side, and again, deep in thought. Sighing, he yielded, "Well, I suppose that they could see us…as a threat."

Just then I realized what had eluded me for years: Islamic terrorists have as their goal the global rule of Sharia. However, this also is the hope of many, perhaps most, non-violent Muslims. Their goal is identical; their means differ.

Sharia Is Islam

Islamic law, Sharia, is integral to Islam. Exemplified by Muhammad, Sharia is the "way" of Islamic life. It derives from the Qur'an and the hadiths (oral traditions), and developed over Islam's first few centuries. It is expansive, addressing personal morality, religious rituals, family life, food, trade, dealings with unbelievers, governing, and international relations. Here are some restrictions, prohibitions, and punishments listed in the Sharia manual, *The Reliance of the Traveller*:[2]

- Jihad for the promotion of Islam is mandatory for all Muslims
- Claims of rape require four male witnesses
- Female testimony is worth half that of males
- Muslim men may marry up to four women who may be Muslims, Christians or Jews
- Muslim women may marry only Muslim men, and one at a time
- Thieves' hands are to be cut off
- Apostates are to be killed
- Speaking sarcastically about Sharia is apostasy
- Christians may not evangelize in Islamic states
- Non-Muslims may not criticize or mock (blaspheme) Muhammad, the Qur'an, or Islam
- Non-Muslims must wear distinguishing clothing in Islamic states
- Jews and Christians are forbidden to build new synagogues or churches in Islamic states
- Existing churches and synagogues may not be repaired
- Non-Muslims must pay additional taxes to assure safety

Violations of Sharia may lead to persecution, exile, prosecution, incarceration, torture, or death. Even outside of Islamic states, Muslims may feel permitted or obliged to enact Sharia punishments upon apostates and blasphemers. Discriminatory systems naturally foster social and judicial discrimination. Attempts to romanticize Sharia are put to the lie as Sharia oppresses so many,[3] especially women,[4] apostates,[5] and non-Muslims.[6]

Global Sharia

Revelations from an April 2013 Pew poll are instructive and puzzling.[7] Some 90 percent of Muslims surveyed favor freedom of religion, and yet over 75 percent of the Muslims surveyed in Afghanistan, Iraq, Niger, Pakistan, Morocco, Bangladesh, Djibouti, and Thailand desire Sharia to be the law of the land. Of those desiring Sharia, over 70 percent in Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Palestinian territories, and Egypt want whippings and thieves' hands amputated; over 80 percent in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Palestinian Territories, and Egypt, and over 50 percent in Jordan, Iraq, Bangladesh, Thailand, and Tajikistan favor stoning for adultery; over 75 percent in Egypt, Jordan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and over 60 percent in the Palestinian Territories and Malaysia approve death for apostasy.

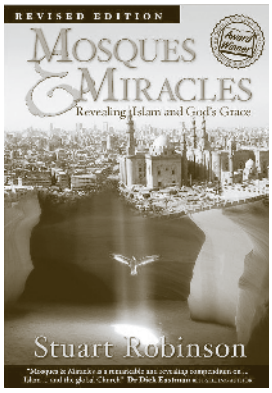
It is a strange moral calculus that produces 90 percent approving religious freedom while 60-75 percent favor killing apostates. Given the oppressive restrictions on non-Muslims in lands ruled by Sharia, and the high levels of persecution in Muslim countries[8], the promotion of religious freedom is patently unequal.[9]

Compliance or Violence

Under Sharia no one may criticize or mock Muhammad or the Qur'an,[10] or evangelize Muslims, or leave Islam. Many Muslims actively demand compliance to Sharia or threaten or enact violence.

For instance, in 1989, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa for the assassination of Salmon Rushdie for writing *The Satanic Verses*. On November 2, 2004, in Amsterdam, a Muslim shot and mutilated Theo Van Gogh for co-creating the film *Submission*. Muslim rioters killed nearly two hundred people after a Danish newspaper in 2005 published cartoons that satirized Muhammad. On September 14, 2010, the *Seattle Times* cartoonist, Molly Norris, who called for the "Everybody Draw Mohammed Day," had changed her name and gone into hiding because of violent threats. Nor should we overlook the wake of persecution through-

Suggested Reading



Mosques and Miracles
by Stuart Robinson
Available at Summit's bookstore:
summit.org/store.

See **Sharia**, page 4

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continued from page 3

out the Middle East and Northern Africa following the so-called "Arab Spring."[11]

A troubling series of incidents have occurred around Dearborn, Michigan, where Christian groups attend an annual Arab festival. Some are mild-mannered and thoughtful conversationalists; others are intentionally provocative. When crowds gather, tensions naturally rise. There have been instances of mob violence. Some security personnel have been partial, arresting or taking into custody law abiding Christians.

When lawful Christians are thus silenced, rather than violent Muslim mobs squelched, liberty is lost and Sharia restrictions effectively are met. Demands of compliance and enacting or threatening violence are rewarded. Recently the City of Dearborn paid an undisclosed amount to several Christians who were mistreated by officers and slandered by the mayor.[12] Other cases are pending.

Some are tempted to suppose such occurrences are too rare to bother. The morally obtuse presume the victims deserved such threats and violence, if not censorship or arrest. However, in America we cherish freedom of speech and of religion, even if others offend us. These liberties are precious and are retained only at the cost of eternal vigilance.

Islam Is An Alternative Civilization

> **"... we may have liberty or Islamic law, not both."**
>
> **Kevin Bywater**

Since my auspicious conversation with our taxi driver, I have found Huntington's book both insightful, concerning, and disagreeable. What he says on pages 217-218 should give us all pause:

> *The underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their power. The problem for Islam is… the West, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the universality of their culture and believe that their superior, if declining, power imposes on them the obligation to extend that culture throughout the world. These are the basic ingredients that fuel conflict between Islam and the West.*

Huntington is correct: Islam is an alternative civilization, a political ideology, and thus naturally conflicts with other civilizations. However, Islam's conflicts extend as well to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, secularists, and others.

Liberty or Islamic Law

Sharia is the heart of Islam, and it pulses in direct conflict with the personal and religious liberties we take for granted. Today countless numbers suffer under the long shadow of Sharia. While some Muslims and non-Muslims have fled to the West to escape Sharia's tyranny,[13] other Muslims seek to impose Sharia even in western countries, sometimes with the aid of politicians and judges.[14] But one thing should now be clear: we may have either liberty or Islamic law, not both.[15]

Editor's Note: An expanded version of this essay will be available at www.summit.org, with more resources and documentation.

Notes

1. New York: Touchstone, 1996.
2. Nuh Ha Mim Keller, ed. and trans., *The Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law…*, Rev. Ed. (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications,1991, 1994).
3. See Andrew G. Bostom, *Sharia Versus Freedom* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 2012).
4. See Nonie Darwish, *Cruel and Usual Punishment: The Terrifying Global Implications of Islamic Law* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008).
5. See Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Infidel* (London: Free Press, 2007), and Nonie Darwish, *Now They Call Me Infidel* (New York: Sentinel, 2006).
6. See Raymond Ibrahim, *Crucified Again* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2013), and Robert Spencer, *Not Peace but a Sword: The Great Chasm between Christianity and Islam* (San Diego: Catholic Answers, 2013).
7. "The World's Muslims: Religion, Politics and Society," April 30, 2013: http://www.pewforum.org/Muslim/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society.aspx. Opinions were collected from 39 countries (every country with more than 10 million Muslims), with over 38,000 people surveyed. Not polled were citizens of Saudi Arabia, Iran, or Sudan.
8. Muslim countries populate Open Doors' 2013 World Watch List: http://www.worldwatchlist.us/world-watch-list-countries/.
9. See Nonie Darwish, *The Devil We Don't Know: The Dark Side of Revolutions in the Middle East* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012).
10. See Geert Wilders, *Marked for Death: Islam's War against the West and Me* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2012).
11. See Nonie Darwish, *The Devil We Don't Know: The Dark Side of Revolutions in the Middle East* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), and Ibrahim, *Crucified Again*.
12. Consult: http://www.answeringmuslims.com/search/label/Dearborn.
13. See Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Nomad: *A Personal Journey through the Clash of Civilizations* (London/New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).
14. See Andrew McCarthy, *The Grand Jihad: How Islam and the Left Sabotage America* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2010, 2011), and Brooke Goldstein and Aaron Meyer, Lawfare: *The War against Free Speech* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Security Policy, 2011)
15. Updates: www.shariahthethreat.org, www.jihadwatch.org, and www.raymondibrahim.com.

a look at our world

news and commentary

Editor's Note: Our President Emeritus, Dr. David Noebel, helps us with research by sending 20-30 pages of clippings of each month's news. To see the complete list of Doc's clippings, go to www.summit.org/resources/the-journal/, open the PDF, and scroll to page 9, or call us at 866.786.6483.

Secularism

When he saw "Catholicism" and "Evangelical Christianity" in a list headed "Religious Extremism," a soldier at an Army Reserve training session last year in Pennsylvania asked for a copy. He then lodged a complaint. The Army has apologized, explaining that the list was produced "without anyone in the chain of command's knowledge or permission." Not only were the religion of Mother Teresa and the religion of Billy Graham grouped with, inter alia, al-Qaeda and the Ku Klux Klan, but "Sunni Islam" and "Islamophobia" were both on the list, an association that offends logic. The geographical provenance of Sunni Islam was identified as "Iraq," while al-Qaeda got to be "transnational." Catholicism was a "U.S." religion, never mind that man addressing the world from his balcony in Rome. The Army, which was embarrassed by all this, understands that it's charged with national security, not the spreading of confusion about religion. That's the media's job.

— *National Review*
May 6, 2013, p.10

Islam

Now that the Boston bombers have turned out, contrary to the fervent hope of the left, to be not Tea Partiers but Muslims, the media are spinning the terrorists' motive away from jihad and shrugging, helplessly mystified, about the "senseless" attacks. And so our willful blindness about Islam continues. Nearly a dozen years after the 9/11 attacks, too many Americans still cling to militant denial about the clear and present danger of an Islamic fundamentalism surging against an anemic Western culture. What will it take to educate them? And once awakened, what steps can we take to reverse the tide?

The vicious Boston attack makes these questions and William "Kirk" Kilpatrick's new book *Christianity, Islam, and Atheism: The Struggle for the Soul of the West* all the more timely. In addition to being an occasional contributor to *FrontPage Magazine*, Kilpatrick is the author of other books, including *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong* and *Books That Build Character: A Guide to Teaching Your Child Moral Values Through Stories*, and his articles about Islam have appeared in *Investor's Business Daily*, *Catholic World Report*, and other publications. He was interviewed here by Jamie Glazov at FrontPage about the new book, which he intended not only as a wake-up call to the West about Islam, but also as a practical guide, especially for Christians, to push back against its spread and to countering Islam's Western apologists.

Christianity, Islam, and Atheism opens with a section titled "The Islamic Threat," in which Kilpatrick describes the rise of supremacist Islam and our correspondingly tepid defense of Western values. Our collapse in the face of Islam, he says, is due in large part to our abandonment of Christianity, which has led to "a population vacuum and a spiritual vacuum" that Islam has rushed to fill. "A secular society… can't fight a spiritual war," Kilpatrick writes. Contrary to the multiculturalist fantasy dominant in the West today, "cultures aren't the same because religions aren't the same. Some religions are more rational, more compassionate, more forgiving, and more peaceful than others." This is heresy in today's morally relativistic world, but it's a critical point because "as Christianity goes, so goes the culture."

Kilpatrick notes that Christians today have lost all cultural confidence and are suffering a "crisis of masculinity," thanks to the feminizing influences of multiculturalism and feminism. He devotes significant space to encouraging Christians to, well, grow a pair, to put it indelicately, in order to confront Islam, the "most hypermasculine religion in history":

> On the one hand, you have a growing population of Muslim believers brimming with masculine self-confidence and assertiveness about their faith, and on the other hand, you have a dwindling population of Christians who are long on nurturance and sensitivity but short on manpower. Who seems more likely to prevail?

Kilpatrick devotes a chapter to "The Comparison" between Islam and Christianity, in which he points out that Christians who buy into the concept of interfaith unity with Muslims would do well to look more closely at our irreconcilable differences instead of our limited common ground; he demonstrates, for example, that the imitation of Christ and the imitation of Muhammad lead a

continued on page 6

"Our ability to resist aggression —whether cultural or military — depends on the conviction that we have something worth defending..."

Mark Tapson

believer in radically different directions.

In "The Culture War and the Terror War" section, Kilpatrick notes that Christianity is on the losing side of the many fronts of our own culture war, and this doesn't bode well for the West's clash with a resurgent Islam. An obsession with the shallow, ephemeral distractions of pop culture isn't helping to shore up our cultural foundations. "Our survival," he writes, "hinges not on generating a succession of momentary sensations, but on finding narratives that tell us who we are, where we have come from, and where we are going":

> Our ability to resist aggression – whether cultural or military – depends on the conviction that we have something worth defending: something that ought to be preserved not only for our own sake but also for the sake of those who attack us.

In the section "Islam's Enablers," Kilpatrick addresses the multiculturalists, secularists, atheists, and Christian apologists for Islam whose intellectual influences have contributed to the moral decline and Islamization of the West. In a chapter with the great title "Multiculturalists: Why Johnny Can't Read the Writing on the Wall," Kilpatrick comments on the indoctrinating impact of multicultural educators and their whitewashing of Islam and denigration of our own culture:

> [O]ur students would have been better served if they had spent less time studying the Battle of Wounded Knee and more time studying the Battle of Lepanto, less time understanding the beauty of diversity and more time understanding the misery of dhimmitude.

Finally, in "The Cold War with Islam," Kilpatrick is pessimistic of our desire to win the hearts and minds of "moderate Muslims." He examines at length just what that label actually means, and then notes that such a strategy isn't an especially helpful one:

> The promotion of the moderate myth is counterproductive because it misleads the West into thinking that its problem is only with a small slice of Islam and because it strengthens the hand of traditional Islam, which is the source of radicalism, not the solution to it.

What are his recommendations for mounting a defense of our values against the aggressive spread of Islamic ones? Reviving the commitment to our own Judeo-Christian values for starters, and then, "instead of a constant yielding to Islamic sensitivities, it may be time for some containment. Sharia … should not be allowed to spread through Western societies." He touches on immigration, noting that it's a problematic issue but suggesting that it's reasonable to question the motives and agendas of immigrant groups. The message we must send? "Islam will not prevail. The West will not yield. You must accommodate to our values and way of life if you choose to live among us."

As for going on the offensive, "instead of making excuses for Islam … we should be devoting our energies to exposing its hollowness," relentlessly sowing the seeds of doubt among Muslims and encouraging them to abandon the faith. Taking that to the next level, Kilpatrick urges Christians to undertake the daunting task of mounting a widespread evangelizing of Muslims, luring them to Christianity with the liberating message of the Gospel. He concedes that this is a long-term strategy and we have no time to lose, but "both Islam and the left stand on very shaky ideological ground … Christians should take courage from knowing that in this war of ideas, all the best ideas are on their side."

The Freedom Center's own Robert Spencer calls *Christianity, Islam, and Atheism* "essential reading" and "a concise and comprehensive introduction to the reality and magnitude of the Islamic supremacist threat." That is exactly right. This brief review does not do justice to the book's breadth and compelling moral and cultural arguments. It's an important addition to a library for educating ourselves and others about, as the subtitle puts it, "the struggle for the soul of the West."

— Mark Tapson
FrontPage Magazine
April 26, 2013

Kroeker Fires Up Political Discussion in Wyoming

Wyoming State Representative Kendell Kroeker has made headlines in recent months because of controversial bills he's sponsored thwarting federal gun control measures. But the states' rights advocate and Summit alumnus has also taken bold legislative stands against abortion, and with good reason.

His youngest son, Daniel, has Down Syndrome.

Last session Kroeker introduced a bill that would prohibit abortions once a heartbeat was detectable in an unborn child. Even with a Republican majority, the bill died in a committee vote. "The day that bill died was the hardest day of my session last year," he said. "When you look at the stats for Down Syndrome kids, an overwhelming majority of them are aborted. All I wanted to do was hold my son, but he was 200 miles away at home."

Kroeker reluctantly attended Summit in 1991, at his mom's urging. It didn't take long for him to realize how special Summit was. Though he became a Christian at an early age, Kroeker said he had spent most of his life as a functional non-Christian. But at Summit he met young men whom he liked and who struck him with their love of God. "On my last night I had a conviction I needed to choose a path: either live as a Christian or abandon Christianity," he said.

Kendell Kroeker

> ***"Those were all faithful men serving in pagan governments. It just seems like our duty to serve."***
>
> **Kendell Kroeker**

As he entered college the next fall, he prayed God would surround him with godly friends, which is exactly what happened.

After graduation Kroeker spent the next several years working for Campus Crusade for Christ in Chile, working as a businessman in Denver, and starting a family. In 2001 he and his wife moved to Casper, Wyoming, to run a motorcycle dealership. Over time he observed the state creeping further and further into the spheres of private citizens and reached a determination. "I completely believe the federal government has overstepped its bounds," he said.

In 2009 he decided to run for the Wyoming House of Representatives and was elected in 2010. In 2012 his constituents re-elected him by three votes, and he plans to run for office again in 2014. He credits Summit with "planting a seed" in him more than twenty years ago to run for office because it pushed him to take Christianity seriously. "One big thing for me is noticing in the study of the Old Testament so many figures serving in government, like Joseph, Daniel, and Nehemiah," Kroeker said. "Those were all faithful men serving in pagan governments. It just seems like our duty to serve."

His gun bills — which would have made enforcing federal firearm restriction in his state illegal — garnered much national media attention. He was quoted in *The New York Times*, *The Huffington Post*, debated liberal commentator Alan Colmes, and was invited to debate Al Sharpton (though scheduling conflicts precluded him from doing so).

If nothing else, his bold legislation has reignited debate about the proper role of the state in protecting life and regulating the private sphere. But his worldview informs his work: "It was really Summit that inspired that conviction."

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INSIDE: Are the U.S. and Sharia law on a collision course?

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a look at our world

from the desk of dr. david noebel

Abortion

Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty for abortionist Kermit Gosnell, who is on trial in Philadelphia for doping one patient to death and killing seven fetuses born alive. He doubtless seems a worthy candidate for death row. Dr. Gosnell, after all, is a monster. Yet his barbarity never required him to venture much beyond the expansive abortion rights created by Roe v. Wade and its companion 1973 Supreme Court decision, Doe v. Bolton. Dr. Gosnell, indeed, could argue that he had a constitutional right to slaughter his very young victims. If instead we insist Kermit Gosnell should die, then perhaps we must reexamine Roe and Doe.

Dr. Gosnell was a merciless killer, willing to perform abortions at any stage of pregnancy. He routinely induced labor in women more than six months pregnant and then cut the spines of their breathing newborns. This was Gosnell's "standard procedure," according to the grand jury report. "These killings became so routine," in fact, "that no one could put an exact number on them."

One corpse found at his clinic, named Baby A, was so large that Gosnell joked he could "walk me to the bus stop." Baby A weighed 6 pounds. After Gosnell snipped Baby A's spine, he crammed the 19-inch corpse into a shoebox, though arms and legs spilled out. Gosnell deposited another child, Baby C, on a countertop while he attended to the newborn's mother. There it lay, breathing and moving its arms, for some 20 minutes. Gosnell's assistant then "slit its neck," just like all the others.

Yet the grand jury found that the "hundreds" of abortions like those of Babies A and C that Gosnell performed over his long career "were not even the worst cases." Gosnell and his wife performed the very late abortions on Sundays, when no other staff were present to see them. Gosnell destroyed those case files at his home, leaving no record. "We may never know the details of these cases," concluded the grand jury.

When law enforcement officers raided Gosnell's office on suspicion of drug dealing, they found some 45 fetal bodies. They were stuffed in "bags, milk jugs, orange juice cartons, and even in cat-food containers." Some were frozen in an office refrigerator. Gosnell also kept "rows of jars" containing severed baby feet.

Such behavior suggests that Gosnell delighted in his violent deeds. One witness recalled a baby that writhed in pain from the pressure of surgical scissors around its neck. Gosnell joked, "That's what you call a chicken with its head cut off." At his trial, Gosnell listened with calm bemusement as prosecutors and witnesses told of his devilry. One journalist reported, "He just calmly watched and occasionally took notes with a vague hint of a smile on his face from time to time."

Dr. Gosnell, in short, fits the profile of a sociopathic killer. But unlike most such deviants, Gosnell could argue that he acted within his constitutional rights.

— Jon A. Shields
The Weekly Standard
April 29, 2013, p. 22

Pro-lifers browbeat the mainstream media into covering the trial of Kermit Gosnell, a Philadelphia abortionist who ran a filthy clinic where some women died and newborns were murdered. Pro-choicers argued that the case illustrated the need to relax laws against late-term abortion, which, as a result of Supreme Court decisions, are almost never enforced. (Gosnell's is the second case we have ever heard of in the post-Roe period.) The grand jury report concluded that it was the reluctance of pro-choice state governments to monitor clinics that allowed Gosnell's practice to fester. One angle we would be amazed to see the press cover: President Obama has argued that late-term abortion should be legal, and has argued and voted for letting newborns delivered in, for example, the fourth month of pregnancy be killed. That isn't an aspect of his record he wants to advertise, since he understands that these issues make the public recoil from the abortion lobby. Which helps explain why journalists recoil from the story.

— *National Review*
May 6, 2013, p. 6, 8

Sociology

Previous civilizations have been overthrown from without by the incursion of barbarian hordes. Christendom has dreamed up its own dissolution in the minds of its own intellectual elite. Our barbarians are home products, indoctrinated at the public expense, urged on by the media systematically stage by stage, dismantling Christendom, depreciating and deprecating all its values. The whole structure is now tumbling down, dethroning its God, undermining all its certainties. All this, wonderfully enough, is being done in the name of the health, wealth, and happiness of all mankind."

— Malcolm Muggeridge
The End of Christendom
p. 17

More than 500 people were murdered in Chicago last year. Yet Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel still found time to berate the fast-food franchise Chick-fil-A for not

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sharing "Chicago values" — apparently, because its founder does not approve of gay marriage.

Two states have legalized marijuana, with more to come. Yet social taboos against tobacco smoking make it nearly impossible to light up a cigarette in public places. Marijuana, like alcohol, causes far greater short-term impairment than does nicotine. But legal cigarette smoking is now seen as a corporate-sponsored, uncool, and dirty habit that leads to long-term health costs for society at large — in a way home-grown, hip, and mostly illegal pot smoking apparently does not.

Graphic language, nudity, and sex are now commonplace in movies and on cable television. At the same time, there is now almost no tolerance for casual and slangy banter in the media or the workplace. A boss who calls an employee "honey" might face accusations of fostering a hostile work environment, yet a television producer whose program shows an 18-year-old having sex does not. Many colleges offer courses on lurid themes from masturbation to prostitution, even as campus sexual-harassment suits over hurtful language are at an all-time high.

A federal judge in New York recently ruled that the so-called morning-after birth-control pill must be made available to all "women" regardless of age or parental consent, and without a prescription. The judge determined that it was unfair for those under 16 to be denied access to such emergency contraceptives. But if vast numbers of girls younger than 16 need after-sex options to prevent unwanted pregnancies, why isn't there a flood of statutory-rape charges being lodged against older teenagers for having consensual relations with younger girls?

Our schizophrenic morality also affects the military. When America was a far more traditional society, few seemed to care that General Dwight Eisenhower carried on an unusual relationship at the front in Normandy with his young female chauffeur, Kay Summersby. As the Third Army chased the Germans across France, General George S. Patton was not discreet about his female liaisons. Contrast that live-and-let-live attitude of a supposedly uptight society with our own hip culture's tabloid interest in General David Petraeus's career-ending affair with Paula Broadwell, or in the private e-mails of General John Allen.

What explains these contradictions in our wide-open but prudish society? Decades after the rise of feminism, popular culture still seems confused by it. If women should be able to approach sexuality like men, does it follow that commentary about sex should follow the same gender-neutral rules? Yet wearing provocative or inappropriate clothing is often considered less offensive than remarking upon it. Calling a near-nude Madonna onstage a "hussy" or "tart" would be considered crude in a way that her mock crucifixion and simulated sex acts are not.

Criminal sexual activity is sometimes not as professionally injurious as politically incorrect thoughts about sex and gender. Former New York governor Eliot Spitzer — found to have hired prostitutes on a number of occasions during his time in office — was given a CNN news show despite the scandal. But when former Miss California Carrie Prejean was asked in the Miss USA pageant whether she endorsed gay marriage, she said no — and thereby earned nearly as much popular condemnation for her candid defense of traditional marriage as Spitzer had for his purchased affairs.

Critics were outraged that talk-show host Rush Limbaugh grossly insulted birth-control activist Sandra Fluke. Amid the attention, Fluke was canonized for her position that federal health-care plans should pay for the contraceptive costs of all women. Yet in comparison to Fluke's well-publicized victimhood, there has been a veritable news blackout for the trial of the macabre Dr. Kermit Gosnell, charged with killing and mutilating in gruesome fashion seven babies during a long career of conducting sometimes illegal late-term abortions. Had Gosnell's aborted victims been canines instead of humans — compare the minimal coverage of the Gosnell trial with the widespread media condemnation of dog-killing quarterback Michael Vick — perhaps the doctor's mayhem likewise would have been front-page news outside of Philadelphia.

Modern society also resorts to empty, symbolic moral action when it cannot deal with real problems. So-called assault weapons account for less than 1 percent of gun deaths in America. But the country whips itself into a frenzy to ban them, apparently to prove that at least it can do something, instead of wading into polarized racial and class controversies by going after illegal urban handguns, the real source of the nation's high gun-related body count.

Not since the late-19th-century juxtaposition of the Wild West with the Victorian East has popular morality been so unbridled and yet so uptight. In short, we have become a nation of promiscuous prudes.

— Victor Davis Hansen
The Washington Times
April 22, 2013, p. 30

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Atheism

Proselytizers of atheism seem to have concluded that if they're big enough jerks, they will seduce the faithful into abandoning God. It's sort of like asking Don Rickles to run your customer-service desk. Christopher Hitchens was a friend, but when he talked about religion, he could be — to use a technical term — a Grade-A Schmuck. Likewise, Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, and the other champions of a soulless, antiseptic world have all the charm of a toothache when they lecture people to kick the habit of the opiate of the masses. And then there are their shock troops. When pastor Rick Warren's depressed son committed suicide recently, an army of the unfaithful took to Twitter to assure the grief-stricken father that there was no heaven, God was a myth, and his son was gone forever. When USA Today wrote about the mind-bogglingly hateful attacks, one commenter on that article counseled that Warren should "abandon primitive superstitions and accept the universe for what it is — a place that is utterly indifferent to us."

One reason the atheistic horde has grown so aggressive and nasty is that they feel the wind at their backs. The pews are emptying and science is declaring, more and more loudly, that it has Figured Everything Out. Another reason is that conservatives, mostly conservative Christians, have been pretty much the only ones fighting back. Perhaps just in time, some allies seem to be walking onto the field. Thomas Nagel — no Christian conservative — recently published Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False. It generated an enormous controversy because the (once) respected philosopher has come to the conclusion that boiling all life, all existence, down to a bunch of atoms and molecules bumping around doesn't make much sense. He doesn't come right out and embrace God or anything wacky like that. But he says there's just got to be something more to things than what the materialists can measure and quantify. Predictably, the discrediting has begun. Expect Nagel to be paraded around in a dunce cap any day now.

Another quasi ally is Jonathan Haidt, the psychologist who studies, among other things, how political attitudes are formed and who has come to the apparently controversial conclusion that conservatives are not crazy. Indeed, Haidt argues that conservatives tend to be more morally sophisticated than liberals, in part because we are better at understanding the liberals' position than liberals are at understanding ours.

The latest entrant to the fray, and probably an unwitting one, is Frans de Waal, the world's foremost primatologist and a heavyweight in the neo-Darwinist camp. A big chunk of his new book, The Bonobo and the Atheist: The Search for Humanism Among the Primates, is aimed at telling the atheists to chill out.

"What good," de Waal asks, "could possibly come from insulting the many people who find value in religion?" While a nonbeliever himself, he respects people of faith and is quite simply bored by efforts to disprove the existence of God. (Imagine how bored God is.) He rejects the importance of the question posed by Nietzsche, "Is man only a blunder of God? Or is God only a blunder of man?" If forced to choose, de Waal would answer yes to the latter. But he thinks little will be gained by forcing everyone to accept that God is dead.

The way to cut through the knot, according to de Waal, is to accept that morality originates from within. De Waal persuasively argues that morality is part of our factory-installed software. In the chicken-or-egg argument about which comes first, morality or religion, de Waal argues it is morality by a mile. It entered our genetic software "at least a hundred millennia" before anything recognizable as modern religion manifested itself (though I'm not sure how he knows what religion looked like 100,000 years ago). He believes his findings refute what he calls "veneer theory" — the idea that morality is simply a thin overlay of words and laws that we need to keep us from doing terrible things. As Ivan Karamazov says, "If there is no God, everything is permitted."

And here we have something of a problem, and I think it would be helpful for conservatives and perhaps our newfound allies to flesh it out a bit. De Waal seems to think that religious people, social conservatives, traditionalists, and philosophers "reason [themselves] toward moral truths. Even if they don't invoke God, they're still proposing a top-down process in which we formulate the principles and then impose them on human conduct." He seems to think that by demonstrating that morality comes from below, that we — and by "we" he means not just humans but all primates, and many other animals — are born with moral sentiments, he can move both sides to common ground. Morality for De Waal isn't an abstraction, it is in effect a bodily function.

I'm not sure he'll succeed. A. C. Grayling, an ardent atheist who claims to be polite about it, has nonetheless poured scorn on de Waal. On the other hand, conservatives would have a short trip

to common ground with de Waal. The parts of his book aimed at traditionalists and believers are likely to elicit a "Yeah, so what?" It may be — or have been — controversial among scientists to say that apes and some other animals have feelings, but I don't think anyone at this point doubts it, particularly dog owners.

More important, using studies of chimps to prove that morality has a genetic component in humans too, while interesting, will have exactly zero effect on how most traditionalists view morality, because most traditionalists would not object to the assertion that humans are endowed by their creator with moral sentiments, although they might find it incomplete. As far as I know, there's nothing in Christianity or Judaism — never mind generic conservatism — that would cause adherents to recoil at the news that we're born with an instinct to do good. You will look in vain to find a Christian conservative denouncing Adam Smith's assertion that we are endowed with moral sentiments. Almost 20 years ago, James Q. Wilson wrote a wonderful book demonstrating that humans are born with a moral sense. (The book was called, fittingly enough, "The Moral Sense.")

But saying that we are born with a moral instinct is not to say that we always instinctually know what is moral. Not everyone believes in Original Sin, but most traditionalists believe we are built from crooked timber. We are flawed creatures, vulnerable to temptation. Moreover, life is complicated and confusing, and as a result we sometimes need help finding our way in the darkness. Men aren't angels, which is why, Jews believe, God gave us the Torah — so we could understand what God wants from us. (Angels don't need instruction: They know right from wrong from Day One.) And Christianity teaches that man has the capacity to know right from wrong. He has a sense of repugnance, the sense that some things are wrong, but also has the faculty of reason. The Church tries to use reason to help people rightly form their consciences.

In interviews and in the book, de Waal puts a lot of emphasis on experiments that show that primates have a sense of fairness. If you feed two chimpanzees slices of cucumbers to get them to do a task — put pegs in holes, identify the right object, write Tom Friedman's column, whatever — they will happily do it. But if you suddenly start rewarding one chimp with grapes while continuing to pay the other with cucumber wages, the cucumber-eater will throw a fit and stop working. De Waal and his fellow researchers call this "inequity aversion." The same phenomenon has been documented in dogs, which surprises me not in the least.

But is this really about inequity? Isn't it more about what we traditionalists might call "envy" (which is a sin)? Even if it's also true that the grape-eater would be admirably altruistic if he shared his higher wages? This is a nice illustration of much of what was wrong with Occupy Wall Street: Some of these howler monkeys were ooo-ooo-eee-ahh-ing over not getting grapes from the government; their complaints about bailouts were focused on how unfair it was that they didn't get bailouts, too. People and chimpanzees alike may shout their version of "No fair!" when they don't get what they want, but that doesn't show that they have been treated unfairly.

Of course, sometimes they have been. Which is why religion, philosophy, and traditional morality are so vital — because they help us think about and if necessary revise our immediate moral reactions.

In other words, the claim that we have moral instincts is great as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. What is fascinating about not just de Waal's work, but aspects of Haidt's and Nagel's as well, is the degree to which it cries out for conservatives to say, "We told you so." In the language of social science, conservatives have been saying this sort of thing for generations. A half-century ago, Will Herberg had already described man as Homo religiosus in these pages and elsewhere. Similarly, Robert Nisbet was writing about man's innate need for community long before the neo-Darwinists got in on the action. And of course F. A. Hayek was warning of the perils of scientism — the smuggling of scientific concepts and language into the realms of politics and morality as a means to claim objective authority for subjective value judgments — decades ago.

And then there was Eric Voegelin, who warned that man's religious nature cannot be denied. But we can deny, or at least forget about, the existence of God. "When God is invisible behind the world," Voegelin writes, "the contents of the world will become new gods; when the symbols of transcendent religiosity are banned, new symbols develop from the inner-worldly language of science to take their place." This might explain why the New Atheists behave like the old zealots of yore: They are firebrands for a new faith, and their god is a jealous one.

— Jonah Goldberg
National Review
May 6, 2013, p. 26f

Ethics

I offer the single most politically incorrect statement a modern American

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-- indeed a modern Westerner, period -- can make: I first look to the Bible for moral guidance and for wisdom.

I say this even though I am not a Christian (I am a Jew, and a non-Orthodox one at that). And I say this even though I attended an Ivy League graduate school (Columbia), where I learned nothing about the Bible there except that it was irrelevant, outdated and frequently immoral.

I say this because there is nothing -- not any religious or secular body of work -- that comes close to the Bible in forming the moral bases of Western civilization and therefore of nearly all moral progress in the world.

It was this book that guided every one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, including those described as "deists." It is the book that formed the foundational values of every major American university. It is the book from which every morally great American from George Washington to Abraham Lincoln to the Rev. (yes, "the Reverend," almost always omitted today in favor of his secular credential, "Dr.") Martin Luther King, Jr., got his values.

It is this book that gave humanity the Ten Commandments, the greatest moral code ever devised. It not only codified the essential moral rules for society, it announced that the Creator of the universe stands behind them, demands them and judges humans' compliance with them.

It gave humanity the great moral rule, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

It taught humanity the unprecedented and unparalleled concept that all human beings are created equal because all human beings -- of every race, ethnicity, nationality and both male and female -- are created in God's image.

It taught people not to trust the human heart, but to be guided by moral law even when the heart pulled in a different direction.

This is the book that taught humanity that human sacrifice is an abomination.

This is the book that de-sexualized God -- a first in human history.

This is the book that alone launched humanity on the long road to abolishing slavery. It was not only Bible-believers (what we would today call "religious fundamentalists") who led the only crusade in the world against slavery, it was the Bible itself, thousands of years before, that taught that God abhors slavery. it legislated that one cannot return a slave to his owner and banned kidnapping for slaves in the Ten Commandments. Stealing people, kidnapping, was the most widespread source of slavery, and "Thou shall not steal" was first a ban on stealing humans and then on stealing property.

It was this book that taught people the wisdom of Job and of Ecclesiastes, unparalleled masterpieces of world wisdom literature.

Without this book, there would not have been Western civilization, or Western science, or Western human rights, or the abolitionist movement, or the United States of America, the freest, most prosperous, most opportunity-giving society ever formed.

For well over a generation, we have been living on "cut-flower ethics." We have removed ethics from the Bible-based soil that gave them life and think they can survive removed from that soil. Fools and those possessing an arrogance bordering on self-deification think we will long survive as a decent society without teaching the Bible and without consulting it for moral guidance and wisdom.

If not from the Bible, from where should people get their values and morals? The university? The New York Times editorial page? They have been wrong on virtually every great issue of good and evil in our generation. They mocked Ronald Reagan for calling the Soviet Union an "evil empire." More than any other group in the world, Western intellectuals supported Stalin, Mao and other Communist monsters. They are utterly morally confused concerning one of the most morally clear conflicts of our time -- the Israeli-Palestinian/Arab conflict. The universities and their media supporters have taught a generation of Americans the idiocy that men and women are basically the same. And they are the institutions that teach that America's founders were essentially moral reprobates -- sexist and racist rich white men.

When the current executive editor of the New York Times, Jill Abramson, was appointed to that position she announced that "In my house growing up, The Times substituted for religion." The quote spoke volumes about the substitution of elite media for religion and the Bible in shaping contemporary America.

The other modern substitute for the Bible is the heart. We live in the Age of Feelings, and an entire generation of Americans has been raised to consult their heart to determine right and wrong.

If you trust the human heart, you should be delighted with this development. But those of us raised with biblical wisdom do not trust the heart. So when we are told by almost every university, by almost every news source, by almost every entertainment medium that the heart demands what is probably the most

radical social transformation since Western civilization began -- redefining marriage, society's most basic institution, in terms of gender -- it may be wiser to trust the biblical understanding of marriage rather than the heart's.

My heart, too, supports same-sex marriage. But relying on the heart alone is a terribly flawed guide to social policy. And it is the Bible that has produced all of the world's most compassionate societies.

This, then, is the great modern battle: the Bible and the heart vs. the heart alone.

— Dennis Prager
The Washington Times
April 8, 2013, p. 27

Islam

Now that the Boston bombers have turned out, contrary to the fervent hope of the left, to be not Tea Partiers but Muslims, the media are spinning the terrorists' motive away from jihad and shrugging, helplessly mystified, about the "senseless" attacks. And so our willful blindness about Islam continues. Nearly a dozen years after the 9/11 attacks, too many Americans still cling to militant denial about the clear and present danger of an Islamic fundamentalism surging against an anemic Western culture. What will it take to educate them? And once awakened, what steps can we take to reverse the tide?

The vicious Boston attack makes these questions and William "Kirk" Kilpatrick's new book Christianity, Islam, and Atheism: The Struggle for the Soul of the West all the more timely. In addition to being an occasional contributor to FrontPage Magazine, Kilpatrick is the author of other books, including Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong and Books That Build Character: A Guide to Teaching Your Child Moral Values Through Stories, and his articles about Islam have appeared in Investor's Business Daily, Catholic World Report, and other publications. He was interviewed here by Jamie Glazov at FrontPage about the new book, which he intended not only as a wake-up call to the West about Islam, but also as a practical guide, especially for Christians, to push back against its spread and to countering Islam's Western apologists.

Christianity, Islam, and Atheism opens with a section titled "The Islamic Threat," in which Kilpatrick describes the rise of supremacist Islam and our correspondingly tepid defense of Western values. Our collapse in the face of Islam, he says, is due in large part to our abandonment of Christianity, which has led to "a population vacuum and a spiritual vacuum" that Islam has rushed to fill. "A secular society… can't fight a spiritual war," Kilpatrick writes. Contrary to the multiculturalist fantasy dominant in the West today, "cultures aren't the same because religions aren't the same. Some religions are more rational, more compassionate, more forgiving, and more peaceful than others." This is heresy in today's morally relativistic world, but it's a critical point because "as Christianity goes, so goes the culture."

Kilpatrick notes that Christians today have lost all cultural confidence and are suffering a "crisis of masculinity," thanks to the feminizing influences of multiculturalism and feminism. He devotes significant space to encouraging Christians to, well, grow a pair, to put it indelicately, in order to confront Islam, the "most hypermasculine religion in history":

On the one hand, you have a growing population of Muslim believers brimming with masculine self-confidence and assertiveness about their faith, and on the other hand, you have a dwindling population of Christians who are long on nurturance and sensitivity but short on manpower. Who seems more likely to prevail?

Kilpatrick devotes a chapter to "The Comparison" between Islam and Christianity, in which he points out that Christians who buy into the concept of interfaith unity with Muslims would do well to look more closely at our irreconcilable differences instead of our limited common ground; he demonstrates, for example, that the imitation of Christ and the imitation of Muhammad lead a believer in radically different directions.

In "The Culture War and the Terror War" section, Kilpatrick notes that Christianity is on the losing side of the many fronts of our own culture war, and this doesn't bode well for the West's clash with a resurgent Islam. An obsession with the shallow, ephemeral distractions of pop culture isn't helping to shore up our cultural foundations. "Our survival," he writes, "hinges not on generating a succession of momentary sensations, but on finding narratives that tell us who we are, where we have come from, and where we are going":

Our ability to resist aggression – whether cultural or military – depends on the conviction that we have something worth defending: something that ought to be preserved not only for our own sake but also for the sake of those who attack us.

In the section "Islam's Enablers," Kilpatrick addresses the multiculturalists, secularists, atheists, and Christian apologists for Islam whose intellectual influences have contributed to the moral decline and Islamization of the West. In a chapter with the great title "Multiculturalists: Why Johnny Can't Read the Writing on the Wall," Kilpatrick comments on the

indoctrinating impact of multicultural educators and their whitewashing of Islam and denigration of our own culture:

[O]ur students would have been better served if they had spent less time studying the Battle of Wounded Knee and more time studying the Battle of Lepanto, less time understanding the beauty of diversity and more time understanding the misery of dhimmitude.

Finally, in "The Cold War with Islam," Kilpatrick is pessimistic of our desire to win the hearts and minds of "moderate Muslims." He examines at length just what that label actually means, and then notes that such a strategy isn't an especially helpful one:

The promotion of the moderate myth is counterproductive because it misleads the West into thinking that its problem is only with a small slice of Islam and because it strengthens the hand of traditional Islam, which is the source of radicalism, not the solution to it.

What are his recommendations for mounting a defense of our values against the aggressive spread of Islamic ones? Reviving the commitment to our own Judeo-Christian values for starters, and then, "instead of a constant yielding to Islamic sensitivities, it may be time for some containment. Sharia … should not be allowed to spread through Western societies." He touches on immigration, noting that it's a problematic issue but suggesting that it's reasonable to question the motives and agendas of immigrant groups. The message we must send? "Islam will not prevail. The West will not yield. You must accommodate to our values and way of life if you choose to live among us."

As for going on the offensive, "instead of making excuses for Islam … we should be devoting our energies to exposing its hollowness," relentlessly sowing the seeds of doubt among Muslims and encouraging them to abandon the faith. Taking that to the next level, Kilpatrick urges Christians to undertake the daunting task of mounting a widespread evangelizing of Muslims, luring them to Christianity with the liberating message of the Gospel. He concedes that this is a long-term strategy and we have no time to lose, but "both Islam and the left stand on very shaky ideological ground … Christians should take courage from knowing that in this war of ideas, all the best ideas are on their side."

The Freedom Center's own Robert Spencer calls Christianity, Islam, and Atheism "essential reading" and "a concise and comprehensive introduction to the reality and magnitude of the Islamic supremacist threat." That is exactly right. This brief review does not do justice to the book's breadth and compelling moral and cultural arguments. It's an important addition to a library for educating ourselves and others about, as the subtitle puts it, "the struggle for the soul of the West."

— Mark Tapson
FrontPage Magazine
April 26, 2013

Secularism

Members of Congress have expressed astonishment that the U.S. Army Reserve would use a training brief that slams Catholics, evangelical Christians and others and are demanding the practice come to a halt – now.

"Our nation needs to have an honest conversation about religious extremism and what we can do to avoid religious violence. However, labeling these major world religions as extremists is wrong and hurtful," said a letter by Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo., that was signed by dozens of other members.

It was addressed to Army Secretary John. M . McHugh at the Pentagon.

"We call on you to rescind this briefing and set the record straight on the Army's view on these faith groups by providing a balanced briefing on religious extremism," the letter said.

The letter was prompted by reports that soldiers were taught that evangelical Christians are an extremist threat to America along with groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, KKK, Nation of Islam, al-Qaida and Hamas.

"Men and women of faith who have served the Army faithfully for centuries shouldn't be likened to those who have regularly threatened the peace and security of the United States," said retired Col. Ron Crews, executive director of the Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty. "It is dishonorable for any U.S. military entity to allow this type of wrongheaded characterization. It also appears that some military entities are using definitions of 'hate' and 'extreme' from the lists of anti-Christian political organizations. That violates the apolitical stance appropriate for the military."

See what Christian really is, in "Body of Divinity: The Sum and Substance of the Christian Religion."

The U.S. Army Reserve Equal Opportunity training briefing, given to an Army reserve unit in Pennsylvania, was titled "Extremism and Extremist Organizations."

The material mentions neo-Nazis, the KKK and other white supremacist organizations. Pictures are shown on various slides of people in Klan attire and Nazi flags. The significance of gang tattoos, racist acronyms and numbers was also discussed.

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While the material on gangs and racist organizations is similar to what one might receive from a local police briefing on gang issues, after teaching on neo-Nazis in the military such as Timothy McVeigh, the material makes a remarkable link.

A slide titled "Religious Extremism" lists multiple organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Qaida, Hamas, the Nation of Islam, the Ku Klux Klan and the Christian Identity movement as examples of extremist groups.

However, the first group on the list is evangelical Christianity. Catholicism and ultra-orthodox Judaism are also on the list of religious extremist organizations.

The letter said the members of Congress were concerned to learn of the training brief.

"This is astonishing and offensive and we urge you to immediately rescind this briefing," said the letter.

"Religious extremism is a very serious topic, but equating these major world religions with violent extremist groups is simply not acceptable. As you know, the Army is a microcosm of our country and is filled with faithful and peace-loving Catholics, Jews, Muslims and evangelical Christians who are proudly serving our country. This briefing reveals an anti-religion bias rather than a rational approach to religious extremism."

The signatories, along with Lamborn, were Reps. John Fleming, Robert Pittenger, Scott Garrett, Alan Nunnelee, Tim Huelskamp, Trent Franks, Walter Jones, Vicky Hartzler, Jack Kingston, Steve King, Gus Bilirakis, Vern Buchanan, Tim Walberg, Michele Bachmann, Bill Nuisenga, Mike Kelly, Duncan Hunter, Dan Lipinski, Lynn Jenkins, Ron DeSantis, Randy Weber, Lynn Westmoreland, Jason Chaffetz, Ander Crenshaw, Steven Palazzo, Marsha Blackburn, Bill Posey, James Lankford, Patrick McHenry, Stephen Fincher, Doug LaMalfa, Michael Burgess, Paul Broun, Frank Wolf, Michael Conaway, Jeff Duncan, Dan Benishek, Virginia Foxx, Steve Stockman, Ken Calvert and Jeff Miller.

WND reported that after the military briefing a soldier who describes himself as an evangelical told the trainer he was offended by the material and asked for a copy of it. After receiving a copy, he forwarded the material to Crews.

The material describes religious extremists as those having beliefs, attitudes, feelings or actions that are "far removed from the ordinary." It then elaborates by saying that "every religion has some followers that believe that their beliefs, customs and traditions are the only 'right way' and that all others practicing their faith the 'wrong way.'"

Crews said it is astounding that soldiers were taught that a key foundation of the Christian faith is now considered extreme and compared to those who want to implement Islamic law.

"The idea of salvation being exclusively through Christ is a key doctrine of the Christian faith," Crews said. "It is amazing that the trainer felt they had the authority and right to list evangelical Christian, Catholics and orthodox Jews alongside groups like the Muslim Brotherhood."

The brief does not provide any examples of how evangelical Christians and Catholics are a danger to those serving in the military. However, it offers several examples of Muslim extremists in the military. Among them are:

- Navy petty officer Hassan Abujihad, who emailed classified information to jihadists for possible attacks while serving on a destroyer.
- Ali Abdul Saoud Mohammed, an Army Special Forces instructor at the Special Ops Warfare School at Fort Bragg while simultaneously being a trainer for al-Qaida and traveling overseas to fight with jihadists.
- Sgt Hasan Akbar, who killed two of his fellow soldiers and injured 14 others at a military base in Kuwait when he threw four grenades into three tents where soldiers were sleeping. His reasoning was to prevent the killing of his fellow Muslims.

Conspicuously missing was Muslim Maj. Nidal Hasan, who opened fire on fellow soldiers at Fort Hood while allegedly shouting "Allahu Akbar." Hasan's rampage left 13 dead and 30 injured.

The Army has gone to great lengths to minimize the Hasan attack, going so far as to call it simply a case of workplace violence, similar to when an employee gets into a fight with a co-worker.

The Army has doubled down on its decision by issuing a report to Congress claiming that recent legislation that would label the Fort Hood shootings a terrorist act in order to help survivors and victim's families would jeopardize Hasan's chances of receiving a fair trial.

"Passage of this legislation could directly and indirectly influence potential court-martial panel members, witnesses, or the chain of command, all of whom exercise a critical role under the Uniform Code of Military Justice," the Army said. "Defense counsel will argue that Major Hasan cannot receive a fair trial because a branch of government has indirectly declared that Major Hasan is a terrorist – that he is criminally culpable."

Crews said the major problem with the training brief is that it relies heavily on mate-

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rial provided by the Southern Poverty Law Center, which has claimed that WND, the Family Research Council and other pro-family groups are hate groups and extremists.

"We're concerned the use of the SPLC list is not isolated," Crews said. "The Army should make sure its equal opportunity officers across the military do not fall prey and use this SPLC list that identifies Christian and conservative organizations as hate groups as the basis for their briefing."

— WorldNet Daily
April 21, 2013

And now, what's going to happen to us without barbarians?

They were, those people, a kind of solution.

How many times in the last century have these concluding lines of C. P. Cavafy's famous 1898 poem, "Waiting for the Barbarians," been quoted? How many modern intellectuals have pondered the subversive implications of that sophisticated question?

It's an interesting question. But it turned out to be a hypothetical one. The 20th century didn't lack for barbarians. Indeed, modern barbarism proved more dangerous than the old-fashioned kind. As Churchill put it in his great House of Commons speech on June 18, 1940, after the fall of France, rallying Britain against the National Socialist tyranny in Germany: "But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science."

Of course, Churchill and Britain—joined by the United States and the Soviet Union—prevailed. We averted a new dark age.

But we didn't enter a new age of enlightenment. The Soviet threat replaced the Nazi one. The barbarism of Mao and Pol Pot matched the worst of what had gone before. And the end of the Cold War didn't mean an end to the assaults on civilization—foremost among them the attacks of 9/11.

The bombs on Patriots' Day in Boston brought a fresh reminder, if any were needed, that there are still those who would send us into a new dark age. And the trial of the murderer-abortionist Dr. Kermit Gosnell in Philadelphia reminds us that other barbarous things are being done in our midst. So there are still, in the enlightened and progressive 21st century, barbarians at the gates—and, sadly, within the gates.

The barbarians within the gates should lead us to reconsider certain uncivilized aspects of our own society—such as the unfettered abortion regime of Roe v. Wade, which both empowered Gosnell and removed barriers to his barbarism. It's not fashionable today, even among conservatives, to make Ronald Reagan's pro-life arguments, or to profess concern for civic virtues, as Margaret Thatcher did. Who today explains that the abortion regime of Roe is one unworthy of a decent country, or that uncertainties about how far government can and should go in protecting unborn children are no excuse for a failure to protect them at all? Who points out that how we treat the unborn has implications for how we treat the born? The silence of the liberals about Gosnell is understandable. His deeds raise uncomfortable questions for and about modern liberalism. But what is the excuse for the silence of conservative political leaders?

Haven't conservatives also lapsed into silence about the barbarians outside? Bush's "war on terror" has been much mocked, and not just by liberals. Of course the idea is too abstract. Still, on the big question Bush was right. Terror is real, and terrorists must be defeated. Bush's failure was to stop short in 2004, when he had the terror sponsors on their heels, and to allow them to regain momentum. That momentum has accelerated under President Obama.

Consider the attitude of the Obama administration, as revealed in this exchange in the White House press room last Wednesday, two days after the Boston terror attack. A journalist asked White House spokesman Jay Carney the following question:

I send my deepest condolence to the victims and families in Boston. President Obama said that what happened in Boston was an act of terrorism. I would like to ask: Do you consider the U.S. bombing of civilians in Afghanistan earlier this month that killed—that left 11 children and a woman killed a form of terrorism? Why, or why not?

The White House spokesman's answer?

Well, I would have to know more about the incident. And obviously the Department of Defense would have answers to your questions on this matter. We have more than 60,000 U.S. troops involved in a war in Afghanistan, a war that began when the United States was attacked in an attack that was organized on the soil of Afghanistan by al Qaeda, by Osama bin Laden, and others. And 3,000 people were killed in that attack. And it has been the president's objective, once he took office, to

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make clear what our goals are in Afghanistan, and that is to disrupt, dismantle, and ultimately defeat al Qaeda. With that as our objective to provide enough assistance to Afghan national security forces and the Afghan government to allow them to take over security for themselves, and that process is under way and the United States has withdrawn a substantial number of troops and we're in the process of drawing down further as we hand over security lead to Afghan forces. And it is certainly the case, but I refer you to the Defense Department for details, that we take great care in the prosecution of this war, and we are very mindful of what our objectives are.

Appalling. We have a White House spokesman who seems incapable of saying: We regret any inadvertent killing of civilians in Afghanistan, but American troops fighting there are not engaged in terrorism. We have a White House that lacks moral clarity about the world in which we live. Moral clarity by itself isn't sufficient to produce a successful national security strategy, or for that matter successful domestic policies. But a degree of moral clarity and candor is surely necessary. A political leadership that cannot speak of barbarism with the same confidence with which medicine speaks, for example, of cancer, cannot understand political phenomena for what they are and cannot deal with the threats to civilization as they exist.

In the 19th century, liberals like John Stuart Mill could write of civilization and barbarism. In the last half of the 20th century, as liberalism degenerated, it fell to conservatives like Reagan and Thatcher to call the evil empire by its proper name, and to stand up to it. Do we in the 21st century have what it takes to confront and defeat today's barbarians? It's not a sophisticated question. But it's a real one.

— *The Weekly Standard*
April 29, 2013, p. 7

Global Warming

(Reuters) - Scientists are struggling to explain a slowdown in climate change that has exposed gaps in their understanding and defies a rise in global greenhouse gas emissions.

Often focused on century-long trends, most climate models failed to predict that the temperature rise would slow, starting around 2000. Scientists are now intent on figuring out the causes and determining whether the respite will be brief or a more lasting phenomenon.

Getting this right is essential for the short and long-term planning of governments and businesses ranging from energy to construction, from agriculture to insurance. Many scientists say they expect a revival of warming in coming years.

Theories for the pause include that deep oceans have taken up more heat with the result that the surface is cooler than expected, that industrial pollution in Asia or clouds are blocking the sun, or that greenhouse gases trap less heat than previously believed.

The change may be a result of an observed decline in heat-trapping water vapor in the high atmosphere, for unknown reasons. It could be a combination of factors or some as yet unknown natural variations, scientists say.

Weak economic growth and the pause in warming is undermining governments' willingness to make a rapid billion-dollar shift from fossil fuels. Almost 200 governments have agreed to work out a plan by the end of 2015 to combat global warming.

"The climate system is not quite so simple as people thought," said Bjorn Lomborg, a Danish statistician and author of "The Skeptical Environmentalist" who estimates that moderate warming will be beneficial for crop growth and human health.

Some experts say their trust in climate science has declined because of the many uncertainties. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had to correct a 2007 report that exaggerated the pace of melt of the Himalayan glaciers and wrongly said they could all vanish by 2035.

"My own confidence in the data has gone down in the past five years," said Richard Tol, an expert in climate change and professor of economics at the University of Sussex in England.

Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius first showed in the 1890s how man-made carbon dioxide, from coal for instance, traps heat in the atmosphere. Many of the exact effects are still unknown.

Greenhouse gas emissions have hit repeated record highs with annual growth of about 3 percent in most of the decade to 2010, partly powered by rises in China and India. World emissions were 75 percent higher in 2010 than in 1970, UN data show.

UN PANEL SEEKS EXPLANATION

A rapid rise in global temperatures in the 1980s and 1990s - when clean air laws in developed nations cut pollution and made sunshine stronger at the earth's surface - made for a compelling argument that human emissions were to blame.

The IPCC will seek to explain the current pause in a report to be released in three parts from late 2013 as the main scientific roadmap for governments in

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shifting from fossil fuels towards renewable energies such as solar or wind power, the panel's chairman Rajendra Pachauri said.

According to Pachauri, temperature records since 1850 "show there are fluctuations. They are 10, 15 years in duration. But the trend is unmistakable."

The IPCC has consistently said that fluctuations in the weather, perhaps caused by variations in sunspots or a La Nina cooling of the Pacific, can mask any warming trend and the panel has never predicted a year-by-year rise in temperatures.

Experts say short-term climate forecasts are vital to help governments, insurers and energy companies to plan.

Governments will find little point in reinforcing road bridges over rivers, for instance, if a prediction of more floods by 2100 doesn't apply to the 2020s.

A section of a draft IPCC report, looking at short-term trends, says temperatures are likely to be 0.4 to 1.0 degree Celsius (0.7-1.8F) warmer from 2016-35 than in the two decades to 2005. Rain and snow may increase in areas that already have high precipitation and decline in areas with scarcity, it says.

EXCEPTIONS AND CHALLENGES

Pachauri said climate change can have counter-intuitive effects, like more snowfall in winter that some people find hard to accept as side-effects of a warming trend. An IPCC report last year said warmer air can absorb more moisture, leading to heavier snowfall in some areas.

A study by Dutch experts this month sought to explain why there is now more sea ice in winter. It concluded melted ice from Antarctica was refreezing on the ocean surface - this fresh water freezes more easily than dense salt water.

Some experts challenged the findings.

"The hypothesis is plausible I just don't believe the study proves it to be true," said Paul Holland, an ice expert at the British Antarctic Survey.

Concern about climate change is rising in some nations, however, opinion polls show. Extreme events, such as Superstorm Sandy that hit the U.S. east coast last year, may be the cause. A record heatwave in Australia this summer forced weather forecasters to add a new dark magenta color to the map for temperatures up to 54 degrees Celsius (129F).

— Alister Doyle
Reuters
April 16, 2013

A few months ago, a group of students in Oslo produced a brilliant spoof video that lampooned the charity pop song genre. It showed a group of young Africans coming together to raise money for those of us freezing in the north. "A lot of people aren't aware of what's going on there right now," says the African equivalent of Bob Geldof. "People don't ignore starving people, so why should we ignore cold people? Frostbite kills too. Africa: we need to make a difference." The song – Africa for Norway – has been watched online two million times, making it one of Europe's most popular political videos.

The aim was to send up the patronising, cliched way in which the West views Africa. Norway can afford to make the joke because there, people don't tend to die of the cold. In Britain, we still do. Each year, an official estimate is made of the "excess winter mortality" – that is, the number of people dying of cold-related illnesses. Last winter was relatively mild, and still 24,000 perished. The indications are that this winter, which has dragged on so long and with such brutality, will claim 30,000 lives, making it one of the biggest killers in the country. And still, no one seems upset.

Somewhere between the release of the 1984 Band Aid single and Al Gore's 2006 documentary An Inconvenient Truth, political attention shifted away from such problems. The idea of people (especially old people) dying in their homes from conditions with which we are all familiar now seems relatively boring. Much political attention is still focused on global warming, and while schemes to help Britain prepare for the cold are being cut, the overseas aid budget is being vastly expanded. Saving elderly British lives has somehow become the least fashionable cause in politics.

The reaction to the 2003 heatwave was extraordinary. It was blamed for 2,000 deaths, and taken as a warning that Britain was horribly unprepared for the coming era of snowless winters and barbecue summers. The government's chief scientific officer, Sir David King, later declared that climate change was "more serious even than the threat of terrorism" in terms of the number of lives that could be lost. Such language is never used about the cold, which kills at least 10 times as many people every winter. Before long, every political party had signed up to the green agenda.

Since Sir David's exhortations, some 250,000 Brits have died from the cold, and 10,000 from the heat. It is horribly clear that we have been focusing on the wrong enemy. Instead of making sure energy was affordable, ministers have been trying to make it more expensive, with carbon price floors and emissions trading schemes. Fuel prices have doubled over seven years, forc-

ing millions to choose between heat and food – and government has found itself a major part of the problem.

This is slowly beginning to dawn on Ed Davey, the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. He has tried to point the finger at energy companies, but his own department let the truth slip out in the small print of a report released on Wednesday. The average annual fuel bill is expected to have risen by £76 by 2020, it says. But take out Davey's hidden taxes (carbon price floor, emissions trading scheme, etc) and we'd be paying an average £123 less. His department has been trying to make homes cheaper to heat, and in a saner world this would be his only remit: to secure not the greenest energy, but the most affordable energy.

By now, the Energy Secretary will also have realised another inconvenient truth – that, for Britain, global warming is likely to save far more lives then it threatens. Delve deep enough into the Government's forecasts, and they speculate that global warming will lead to 6,000 fewer deaths a year, on average, by the end of the decade. This is the supposed threat facing us: children would be less likely to have snow to play in at Christmas, but more likely to have grandparents to visit over Easter. Not a bad trade-off. The greatest uncertainty is whether global warming, which has stalled since 1998, will arrive quickly enough to make a difference.

It's daft to draw any conclusions from this freakish, frozen spring. But in general, the computer-generated predictions do not seem as reliable as they did when Al Gore was using them to scare the bejesus out of us. A few weeks ago, scientists at the University of Washington found that man's contribution to global warming may have been exaggerated – by a factor of two. The natural cycle of heating and cooling, they discovered, plays a far bigger role than they had imagined. Mr Davey's fuel bill taxes may do nothing for the planet. But they will certainly lead to poorer, colder homes and shorter lives.

Our understanding of climate science may be weak, but our understanding of basic medicine is not. Low temperatures increase blood pressure and weaken the immune system, making everyone more vulnerable to bugs. For the elderly, this can be fatal. People don't actually die of frostbite, as the Norwegian video teasingly suggested. They die of flu, or thrombosis, or other conditions they would not have acquired if their house had been warmer. Far fewer Scandinavians die in winter, because they have worked out how to defeat the cold: keep the heating on; insulate houses. It really is that simple.

So what's stopping us? For years, various government schemes have sought to insulate lofts or upgrade boilers, but nowhere near quickly enough. When MPs looked into this three years ago, they heard from a Mr P of Cornwall. "The offer of a boiler is very much appreciated," he said. "We hope that we will still be alive when we get the visit about the end of February." With someone dying of the cold every seven minutes during winter, that may not have been a joke. The modest insulation scheme has been hit by cuts, while the mammoth winter fuel payment scheme continues untouched. The word "fuel" is, of course, redundant: it's a simple bung, paid to all pensioners – who are more likely to vote.

I once drank a winter fuel allowance. It had been paid to a self-made millionaire who was appalled that people like him were being written a cheque, and he had used it to buy a magnum of claret in protest. He was a major philanthropist, but wanted to make the point to his lunch guests: the winter fuel payment is a scandal, whose very existence suggests that government is not serious about helping people make it through winter.

No one would wear a wristband or pin on a ribbon for the elderly victims of the cold – and yet freezing weather kills more than diabetes or breast cancer. The cause of death is perhaps too familiar, and the remedy too obvious, to attract much attention. If the money for winter fuel payments was instead used to help insulate homes, we might – like Norway – be able to joke about winter. As things stand, dying of the cold remains a horribly British disease.

— Fraser Nelson
London Telegraph
March 28, 2013

Marriage

The homosexual lobby is on the verge of a historic victory. The potential consequences will be calamitous for democracy and the family. It will usher in a brave new world marked by cultural decadence and judicial tyranny. Traditional America will be smashed — probably forever.

This week, the Supreme Court heard two landmark cases regarding same-sex unions. The justices are expected to render their decision sometime in the spring. The first case involves California's Proposition 8, which bans homosexual marriage. The other is the Defense of Marriage Act, passed by both Republicans and D emocrats and signed by President Clinton. The goal of liberals (and some conservatives) is to legalize same-sex marriage by using the power of the federal government

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to redefine an institution that goes back thousands of years. They are seeking to impose a social revolution from above. Their weapon: the courts.The attempt to roll back Proposition 8 represents a fundamental assault on our democracy. In 2008, the voters of California decided in a free and fair election to retain the historic — and real — definition of marriage as the union between a man and a woman. The referendum passed with nearly 53 percent. Blacks and Hispanics supported it by large majorities. The electorate spoke. Instead of respecting the vote, however, the homosexual lobby has sought to overturn the will of the people. The courts then nullified the election pending the appeal process. It is now in the hands of the high court.This is a national tragedy — and shame. Democracy is being subordinated to judicial imperialism. The right of self-government is being supplanted by the rule of unelected and unaccountable elites. It is liberal fascism masquerading as judicial review. Wearing black robes does not give judges the justification to repeal an election. Judges are becoming modern-day fascists, unilaterally wielding state power to trample on legislative prerogatives, democratic freedoms and basic social institutions. We are slowly ceding power not to a single dictator, but to a gang of legal oligarchs — ideological leftist activists who are legislating from the bench. If five Supreme Court justices can reverse Proposition 8, then popular elections will be rendered meaningless. We are sliding toward a post-democratic age. This is the inevitable logic of secular liberalism.Moreover, homosexual marriage has nothing to do with "tolerance" or ending "discrimination." It is about legitimizing the homosexual lifestyle, compelling society to embrace a radical new morality. Same-sex marriage is a contradiction, an oxymoron. It is an attempt to redefine reality and human nature. Marriage is the basic institution of society. Its very definition (and essence) is the sacred union between a man and a woman. Its fundamental aim — and the reason for centuries it has held a special status in Western civilization — is to produce, raise and socialize children. It is the social conveyor belt by which one generation is passed on to the next. Destroy the family, and with it goes the glue holding society together.Homosexuals cannot have children naturally. Their lifestyles and behaviors inevitably lead to a culture of death — the absence of any future human life, the fruits of a marital union. Liberal activists have been trying desperately to suppress a fundamental truth: Homosexual behavior — for example, sodomy — is unnatural and immoral. This is why it has been historically considered a grave sin in Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Even deists, such as Thomas Jefferson, believed sodomy so violated public morality that those who practiced it should be castrated.

Yet, by claiming that marriage is a "civil right," pro-homosexual activists are hoping to portray same-sex marriage critics as intolerant bigots. In fact, their objective is to import the "hate speech" laws common in Europe. This leads to social intolerance and secular McCarthyism, whereby the Bible is viewed as hate literature for its opposition to homosexuality. The Catholic Church is demonized for its teachings. European Christians and traditionalists face growing persecution, including denial of access to government employment and positions at universities.Marriage is not a right; rather, it is a solemn responsibility and distinct privilege that has been accorded a sacred status because of its overwhelming societal importance. It's not some kind of a public club open to everyone. Liberal logic on the issue inevitably paves the way for moral anarchy and social disintegration. If marriage is a civil right, then anyone — including polygamists, bigamists and pedophiles — will demand that they be allowed to form unions. In fact, this is already taking place in Europe, Canada and Brazil, where same-sex marriage has been legalized.The push for homosexual marriage is a symptom of cultural decay and moral decadence. It reveals a civilization unable or unwilling to defend its most vital institutions. This is why many Americans innately know its wrong. It's why the homosexual lobby has to crush dissenting voices. The cost, however, is the sabotaging of our democracy.

— Jeffrey T. Kuhner
The Washington Times
April 8, 2013, p. 30