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## Why Christianity Matters



BY OWEN HILL

Gladys Alyward (1902-1970), a British Christian missionary to China, is perhaps best remembered for her role as a “foot-inspector” — someone who was appointed by the Mandarin to travel around and unbind women’s feet, a practice which the Chinese government finally decided to end. So Alyward traveled on behalf of the government as a foot-inspector, tending to the physical needs of women in China. This concern for their needs opened the door for her to share the Gospel wherever she went.

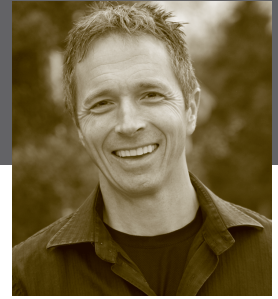
Dr. Kent Brantley, of Samaritan’s Purse, and Nancy Writebol, with Service in Mission, were two missionaries administering medical care to Ebola patients in Liberia when they contracted the disease. They were brought back to the U.S. for treatment, where they eventually recovered. While Brantley and Writebol’s cases received much public attention, they are not the only Christians who have chosen to go to Liberia with the express purpose of alleviating the physical suffering of many.

Christianity was the animating principle for Alyward, Brantley, Writebol and so many others who have been willing to put their lives on the line for the real, tangible good of others. In both of these stories, people had the courage to live because they knew life is inherently valuable and existence is good. Christianity matters because it is true, and everyone reading this understands that. But these stories illustrate other reasons why Christianity is relevant and matters absolutely. This Christmas season as we remember the

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# from the president's desk

a word from dr. jeff myers



Christmas transforms culture. The manger led to the cross, the cross offered salvation, and men and women redeemed by the gospel and empowered by the Holy Spirit changed and continue to change the world.

Ernest Gordon's description of how prisoners in a Japanese prisoner of war camp brought hope out of misery illustrates this perfectly.

A member of the elite Scottish Highlanders, Gordon tells his story in the book *To End All Wars*. In gruesome detail he describes the filthy, disease-ridden, and inhumane conditions of the Chungkai prison camp, in which prisoners died from starvation, disease, overwork, beatings, shootings, and beheadings. One man, Dusty, professing faith in Christ, was hung on a tree to die like his Savior.

Some men just succumbed to hopelessness and died. The remaining prisoners, deprived of their humanity, devolved into a beastly mindset of survival of the fittest. Death meant nothing and life meant little more. Gordon writes, "Death called to us from every direction. It was in the air we breathed, the food we ate, the things we talked about. The rhythm of death obsessed us with its beat — a beat so regular, so pervasive, so inescapable that it made Chungkai a place of shadows in the dark valley."

But two events, according to Gordon, changed everything. First, word spread of a believing Christian who had sacrificed his own food and stayed

by the side of his bunk mate to nurse him back from the brink of death. His bunk mate survived; he did not. In another instance, a guard incensed over the supposed theft of a shovel threatened to randomly execute members of a work detail. A believing Christian stepped forward to "confess" and the enraged guard beat him, crushing his skull. The others looked on in horror, helpless to assist the man who had given his life for theirs. A re-count later showed no shovels missing.

**"Christmas transforms culture."**

**Dr. Jeff Myers**

From a purely Darwinian view, these deaths were a foolish waste. But in the camp, they led to a new attitude of "you first" rather than "me first." Christian volunteers changed gangrenous bandages and bathed hideous wounds. Life regained some of its meaning. Even the experience of death changed as prisoners stopped piling bodies and elected chaplains to conduct honorable funerals for the fallen.

Out of this restored humanity grew a stunning culture. The prisoners formed a library and taught courses in everything from math to philosophy to languages (nine of them). They staged plays. Retrieving six violins from a vandalized relief shipment, they formed an orchestra and held concerts.

Camp conditions had not changed.

Frightful diseases still claimed lives. Food was still scarce and nauseating. But sacrifice had brought meaning out of misery. Gordon says:

"Death was still with us — no doubt about that. But we were slowly being freed from its destructive grip. We were seeing for ourselves the sharp contrast between the forces that made for life and those that made for death. Selfishness, hatred, envy, jealousy, greed, self-indulgence, laziness, and pride were all anti-life. Love, heroism, self-sacrifice, sympathy, mercy, integrity, and creative faith, on the other hand, were the essence of life, turning mere existence into living in its truest sense. These were the gifts of God to men."

Worldviews that deny suffering or fixate on survival find this incomprehensible. It takes a baby in a manger to make sense of it all, a baby who moved from the chill of a stable to the shadow of the cross to the light of glory. Whether in a remote outpost of the Roman Empire or a forgotten prisoner of war camp in Asia, Christ does not merely stand against culture; he transforms it.

This is my family's fourth "Summit Christmas." It is a privilege to walk with our dedicated staff as they prepare young adults to emerge as leaders, grow strong in faith, experience courage in standing for truth, and bring the life and hope of the gospel to a culture that has lost its way. We wish you a merry Christmas.



# christianity matters

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birth of our Savior, let us reflect deeply on the difference his coming makes in each of us individually, and in this world in which we live.

## Created in God's Image

Christ's incarnation hallowed our humanity, and in turn, Christianity validates human experience and says "your life matters." Atheism and secularism can't produce a reason for why life matters. And no world religion can convey the same dignity on humans as Christianity does, because they all lack the truth of *imago dei*, humans bearing the image of God. The woman at the well did not have great social significance, and yet regardless of her background, Christ spoke to the true *her* — as someone who was not defined solely by choices or social status in life — and in doing so he affirmed her dignity as a creature of God. When nurses treat the sweating, bleeding, dying Ebola victims, they are saying that each individual life matters, regardless of its transient condition. For humans are more than, though not less than, physical beings; and even in our most weakened state are objects of splendor.

C.S. Lewis describes this in his famous sermon "The Weight of Glory": "There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. ... Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbor, he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ *vere latitat* — the glorified and the glorifier, Glory Himself, is truly hidden."

Only Christianity bestows such dignity on human beings, and gives meaning to life.

Summit's John Stonestreet says, "This idea of the image bearer is never more important for the church to figure out, to preach, share, and bring life to, than today. Every social conflict today comes down to the root of misunderstanding of the human person. Christians are saying, 'I am the image of God'; the culture is saying, 'I am my inclinations, how I feel, the state that I belong to, what I succeed at.' Christianity says there is an identity given to us and restored by Jesus Christ."

## Redemptive Sacrifice

Christianity gives purpose to sacrifice. Without the truth of who we are, Dietrich Bonhoeffer would have had absolutely no good reason, humanly speaking, to risk his life to stop the evil of Hitler. But because of his devout Christianity, Bonhoeffer knew the endgame. He was willing to risk his life with the knowledge that his patriotism and search for justice might require his fullest measure of devotion to his country and Lord. But Bonhoeffer knew the Christian story is one where sacrifice is not the end.

**“Christianity gives purpose to sacrifice.”**

Recently I had a long lunch with Eddie, a friend of mine who emigrated from Ethiopia. He has an amazing talent for starting businesses and spinning them off to empower others. What is so inspiring is how he discovered this talent.

Eddie's dad left when he was four years old because his mother had converted to Christianity. With three

younger siblings, life was quite difficult for the family. Their stories of God's provision are inspiring in themselves, but one story from Eddie's teenage years shows the power of Christ to bring dignity, even through suffering. A lady in San Diego had a vision that she was supposed to help someone she would meet on her upcoming trip to Ethiopia. As you can guess, she met Eddie and gave him money for his family at a point when they were literally dying from starvation. Eddie wanted to make this money last so he bought some food, but invested the rest in a used grain mill that could provide some lasting work and income for the family. Tragically, the mill broke, and within three weeks they were out of food and money again.

At this point, another missionary in Ethiopia had a vision that he was supposed to reach out to Eddie. After Eddie briefly shared his story, the missionary sensed it wasn't complete, so he asked Eddie to share more details. Once he heard Eddie's idea to create sustainable income and opportunity for the family, along with Eddie's willingness to take calculated risks to help his family, the missionary saw the opening. He helped Eddie raise the funds to buy a new mill. Work quickly expanded and Eddie hired others to join his venture, and his talent for entrepreneurship took root.

Today, Eddie lives in an apartment in Denver with his beautiful wife and young daughter. The mill operation is still providing for his family members in Ethiopia. His father, after reconciliation with the family, helps run a hospitality business Eddie started. In ad-  
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# christianity matters

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dition, Eddie started a transportation company, an oil and gas industry staffing company, a health care company, and is now starting an import/export company. His passion is helping others by providing dignified work for people around the world.

As we take encouragement from every story of the difference Christ has made in our world, it is easy to relate to the author of Hebrews 11 in verses 32-38a:

*And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted, and mistreated — the world was not worthy of them.*

Because Christ now lives in us through His Spirit, we each have the opportunity to exemplify the love of Christ. As author and professor Glenn Sunshine said at Summit's 2014 Adult Conference in his talk about heroes of the faith:

"What do all these (heroes) have in common? They bring the Gospel into every area of their life. These (heroes of the faith) understood that the biblical worldview has implications for everything. They looked at the world around them and asked, 'How can I live that out in my calling, in my place, in my time.' We should ask then: What are the needs in my community? How can I demonstrate, by my actions, the love of Christ in a fallen world?"

## Living Story

Without Christianity, it would be impossible to have meaningful stories. Without Christianity, and Christ's love ultimately manifested in sacrifice, the virtues that form men and women and create good stories are rendered meaningless. Why would the knight ever gather the courage to conquer the dragon? How could Frodo ever selflessly set aside his comfortable life to go out to save the Shire? Why would Reepacheep ever declare:

*My own plans are made. While I can, I sail east in the Dawn Treader. When she fails me, I paddle east in my coracle. When she sinks, I shall swim east with my four paws. And when I can swim no longer, if I have not reached Aslan's country, or shot over the edge of the world into some vast cataract, I shall sink with my nose to the sunrise.*

All great stories are built around the themes of sacrifice, friendship, virtue, forgiveness, justice, love, mercy. And because of the Cross, they all have meaning. Because of Christianity, we believe in Purpose, in Providence. Each and every one of us has a calling. Not a nebulous, limited, impersonal calling. Rather, we each have the chance to be-

stow dignity and enrich the life of those around us. Whether through business, friendship, conversation, charity, we are called to enter the stories of others and reaffirm the significance of Christ entering our world.

***“The great truth of Christianity means that we are all part of a great story.”***

"Christ knows your story, and my story, every detail and deepest fear," author Eric Metaxas says in his now-famous Prayer Breakfast speech. "Jesus is not just for Christians, he's for everyone. The amazing grace of God is for everyone."

The great truth of Christianity means that we are all part of a great story. A story Christ redeems and a story the world is yearning to see lived with purpose and passion.

Because Jesus came in human form and showed us our true imago dei, we understand the dignity bestowed upon us as beings created in God's image, and our lives have meaning, a reason why life matters. Because Jesus went to the cross and rose from the dead, we have the great hope of redemption in all things, purpose in sacrifice. Because Jesus saves us, rescues us and makes us adopted sons and daughters of God, we have the Great Story that provides the themes for every great story that moves us and gives us purpose.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! Thank you, Jesus, for coming.

*Owen Hill is a Summit alumnus of the Understanding the Times curriculum and a Colorado State Senator.*

# 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/](http://www.summit.org/resources/the-journal/), open the PDF, and scroll to page 9, or call us at 866.786.6483.**

## Same-sex Marriage

If homosexuals get their way, Pastor Donald Knapp won't be behind the pulpit — he'll be behind bars. That's the stunning development in Idaho, where the day liberals promised would never come is already here. Two ministers — a husband and wife team — have been told by their city government that refusing to “marry” a same-sex couple will send them straight to jail.

After 25 years of owning The Hitching Post wedding chapel, Donald and Evelyn are being faced with a situation neither of them thought possible: being imprisoned for their faith. Like the flood of state amendments steamrolled by activist judges, Idaho's fell earlier this month. And with it, religious liberty. Fearing the worst, the Knapps reached out to Alliance Defending Freedom, concerned that their chapel would be targeted. Less than a week later, the battle was at their front door.

For Donald and Evelyn, there was never any question what the duo would do. Unapologetically Christian, the husband-and-wife team is overtly religious, marrying couples with faith-driven vows, and even offering marriage sermons on CD to newlyweds. That doesn't matter to city officials, who had

this marriage message for The Hitching Post: Conform or be punished. And not just any punishment, but 180 days in jail and up to \$1,000 in fines for every day the ministers refuse to perform the ceremony.

“Right now,” said attorney Jeremy Tedesco, “they are at risk of being prosecuted. The threat of enforcement is more than just credible.” Unlike bakery owner Jack Phillips, who Colorado bullied with similar charges, the Knapps are both ministers. And while their chapel is considered a “religious corporation,” even it isn't safe from the same-sex “wedding” march that threatens to put the First Amendment asunder.

FRC warned this moment was coming, but even we didn't expect the government to move this quickly. “The other side insisted this would never happen — that pastors would not have to perform same-sex marriages,” ADF's Tedesco told Fox News' Todd Starnes. “The reality is — it's already happening.” Government officials are making it clear that they'll use their power to punish anyone who opposes the agenda of homosexual activists. It's a scary turnaround for a nation founded on the same free exercise of religion,

**“FRC warned this moment was coming, but even we didn't expect the government to move this quickly.”**

**Tony Perkins**

which is now punishable by six months in prison. When there are plenty of other options for homosexuals seeking a marriage license, why should they be able to use the power of government to force Christians to participate?

Eugene Volokh, in today's *Washington Post*, tries to tackle this Left's conundrum and agrees that there's no way around the obvious: Somebody's rights have to give. “Compelling ministers to speak words in ceremonies that they think are immoral is an unconstitutional speech compulsion. Given that the Free Speech Clause bars the government from requiring public school students to say the pledge of allegiance ... the government can't require ministers — or other private citizens — to speak the words in a ceremony, on pain of either having to close their business or face fines and jail time.”

Remember when President Obama sat down and told ABC News that “churches and other faith institutions are still gonna be able to make determinations about what their sacraments are — what they recognize”? Neither does he. Or, for that matter, the rest of his party, which is lighting the same-sex unity candle with the same match it's taking to the Constitution.

— Tony Perkins  
Washington Update  
October 20, 2014

## Capital Punishment & Physician Assisted Suicide

Belgium is on the verge of executing its first murderer by lethal injection.  
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# a look at our world

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Well, not exactly “executing.” The state isn’t going to kill convicted murderer/rapist Frank Van Den Bleeken for his crimes. Rather, it is helping him be euthanized. By a doctor. At a hospital. To which he was transferred after a court ruled that Den Bleeken’s request to end the suffering caused by his imprisonment (he has served 30 years of a life sentence) and continuing violent sexual urges fits snugly within that country’s euthanasia law.

Ironically, Belgium opposes capital punishment under any circumstances. But it legalized euthanasia in 2002. Since then, the country has fallen off a moral cliff, with a growing number of lethal injections administered by doctors not just to the dying, but also to those with severe mental illnesses, crippling disabilities, and chronic, nonterminal illnesses. There have been several medicalized joint killings of elderly couples who would rather die together than live apart. Belgium even permits euthanasia followed by organ harvesting and the assisted suicide of dying children if they make the request in writing (among other requirements). Killing a prisoner who would rather be dead than imprisoned is merely the next logical step.

Meanwhile, U.S. opponents of capital punishment claim that death by lethal injection is “cruel and unusual punishment.” Thus, California is prohibited by federal court order from using lethal injection protocols because doing so might cause pain. More recently, a federal judge has ruled that California’s death penalty itself is cruel and unusual punishment, and therefore unconstitutional — because it is almost never carried out!

The lethal-injection-as-cruel-and-un-

usual-punishment meme was furthered earlier this year after two “botched” executions — one in Arizona that took 97 minutes to complete, another in Oklahoma that took 43 minutes. The ACLU lawsuits are flying.

Interestingly, the death drug used in euthanasia/assisted suicide is the same one used in executions. Moreover, studies from the Netherlands — where euthanasia was decriminalized in 1973 and legalized in 2002 — have found that physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia by lethal injection can — as in the Arizona and Oklahoma executions — take considerable time and cause side effects such as vomiting, gasping for air, and seizures. These documented difficulties interfere with the “death with dignity” narrative used to justify the legalization of doctor-assisted suicide — and so are underplayed by its proponents.

Execution has been further entwined with doctor-assisted suicide through the international campaign to prevent executions by drying up the supply of the killing agent, pentobarbital (Nembutal). Oregon and Washington’s assisted-suicide regimens became collateral damage after the campaign made the lethal drug unobtainable.

In Oregon, many assisted suicides are facilitated by the state’s branch of Compassion & Choices, a private group once more honestly named the Hemlock Society. The organization became so alarmed at the death drug dearth that its representatives met with the Oregon Board of Pharmacy to discuss establishing a nonprofit compounding pharmacy to manufacture a generic form of pentobarbital, which C&C would then distribute for use in assisted suicides. So

far, no news on whether the state will go along.

Then there is Oregon governor John Kitzhaber. A medical doctor, Kitzhaber strongly favors giving cancer patients access to lethal doses of pentobarbital. But use it on vicious murderers? Absolutely not! That offends his liberal moral code.

Apparently believing that his own sensibilities matter more than the votes of the state’s citizens — who overturned a court ban and reinstated the death penalty in 1984 — Kitzhaber placed a moratorium on executions for the balance of his time in office.

But Kitzhaber’s reprieve did not sit well with convicted murderer Gary Haugen, who has waived all appeals and wants to be done with life. He sued to be executed, gaining an initial ruling that he has the right to refuse mercy. But that decision was overturned on appeal on the grounds that Kitzhaber has the untrammelled power, as governor, to prevent executions — a decision the Oregon supreme court recently refused to review. So, at least until Kitzhaber is out of office, Haugen is stuck in limbo on death row — unable to die but not wanting to live.

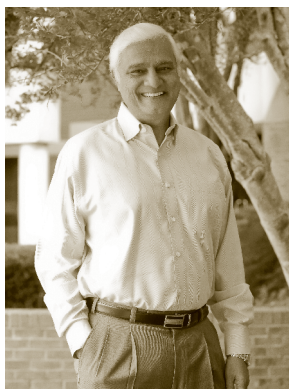
And we are stuck with a paradox: The use of lethal drugs in executions amounts to cruel and unusual punishment, while the use of the same lethal drugs to eliminate someone sick, or sick of life, is “death with dignity.”

Call it “cruel and unusual death with dignity.”

— Wesley J. Smith  
*The Weekly Standard*  
October 27, 2014



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Author & Co-Host, Breakpoint



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President, Ravi Zacharias  
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## INSIDE: How Christmas transforms culture



### 2015 Adult Conference: TRUE – Discovering the Essence of Our Faith

A Summit for grown-ups? Yes! Make plans now to attend March 8-13, 2015 for the Summit Adult Winter Conference.

**Keynote: Josh McDowell** – One of the most articulate Christian apologists of our day, Josh will be displaying several ancient scrolls and historical artifacts that will take your breath away.

Also featured will be Naghmeh Abedini, the wife of Pastor Saeed Abedini, whose story has grabbed headlines as he languishes in an Iranian prison for teaching Christianity. Straight from the time of the apostles, Naghmeh's story highlights the cries of our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world.

**For more information visit [www.summit.org/conferences/adult](http://www.summit.org/conferences/adult)**

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PO Box 207, Manitou Springs, Colorado 80829 | **Phone:** 866.786.6483 | **URL:** [www.summit.org](http://www.summit.org) | **Email:** [aaronz@summit.org](mailto:aaronz@summit.org)



# a look at our world

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## Same-Sex Marriage

As advocates for same-sex marriage celebrate a series of legal victories and Pope Francis strikes a softer tone toward gays, the most conservative quarters of the American evangelical Christian movement are wrestling with how to respond to a dramatically shifting legal and cultural landscape.

Most evangelicals remain firmly opposed to homosexuality, and see the increased legalization of same-sex marriage as a threat to religious freedom and proof of the deterioration of Christian values in society. But some are advocating change from within and openly raising questions about interpretations of biblical prohibitions against homosexuality.

One group, Evangelicals for Marriage Equality, recently launched an effort to support “the right of same-sex couples to be recognized by the government as married,” according to a statement. “You can be a faithful evangelical Christian and at the same time support civil marriage equality for same-sex couples.”

This week in Nashville, the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination in the country and one of the most conservative, is hosting its first national conference on “The Gospel, Homosexuality, and the Future of Marriage.”

SBC leaders say the purpose of the conference is not to re-examine the church’s stance on same-sex marriage and homosexuality, but to help guide member churches through “new challenges” in the culture.

“We cannot revise the gospel we’ve received,” said Russell Moore, head of the convention’s Ethics & Religious Lib-

erty Commission. “The goal is to start a conversation to help equip churches to minister in the changing culture on these issues.”

Mr. Moore said much of the program resulted from conversations with pastors “grappling with the transgender issue as they’re seeking to evangelize to transgender persons. How do we address this biblically? How do we articulate a Christian understanding of marriage to those who disagree with us?”

Demand for guidance surprised organizers: More than 1,200 signed up for the three-day conference. “We had to turn people away,” Mr. Moore said.

The event has also attracted a small number of gay-rights advocates from inside and outside the evangelical movement, including representatives from Evangelicals for Marriage Equality and the Human Rights Campaign, a secular advocacy group. Some advocates attending have arranged private, informal meetings with SBC officials while there, those involved on both sides said.

“Recently we have seen openings in more conservative communities. ... we’re starting to have conversations that did not seem possible before,” said Sharon Groves, director of the Religion and Faith Program for the Human Rights Campaign. “The SBC has not been a friend on our issues ... but we want to keep up on what is emerging in the broader Southern Baptist space. There are individual Southern Baptist ministers and people of faith who are speaking out.”

In a series of columns this fall, Baptist ethicist David Gushee has argued that Bible passages prohibiting homosexuality may actually be prohibitions against sexual violence and promiscuity, and

need to be re-examined.

“The literary and cultural context raises serious questions over whether [those texts] apply to committed homosexual relationships of Christians today,” said Mr. Gushee, whose church isn’t affiliated with the SBC. “The question is not as open and shut as some people say it is.”

While more liberal Protestant denominations have begun to accept openly gay members and support same-sex marriage, Southern Baptists, with nearly 16 million members, are viewed as a bastion of conservative evangelical beliefs.

Andrew Green, a Southern Baptist pastor of First Baptist Church of Lilbourn, Mo., supports the SBC position on same-sex marriage, and says churches must take the lead in educating the next generation on marriage.

“Whenever the word marriage comes up, I always explain, ‘it’s a man and a woman, only a man can marry a woman; only a woman can marry a man,’” he said at a meeting of Southern Baptists earlier this year.

Brandan Robertson, a 22-year-old evangelical writer and spokesman for Evangelicals for Marriage Equality, said attitudes may change with younger evangelicals. Christian millennials have views that are different than their elders’, and are more likely to see same-sex marriage as a civil-rights issue, he said.

“When millennials take hold of the church, evangelicals will have to progress on this issue or fade into oblivion,” he said.

Andrew Walker, a 29-year-old Southern Baptist and the director of the SBC’s policy studies for the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said young, active evangelicals aren’t changing their views

# a look at our world

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on homosexuality, and are committed to “biblical authority.”

“I’d say where most Southern Baptist millennials and youth are on this issue is they have a deer in the headlights look,” said Mr. Walker, who is moderating a discussion in Nashville on “Millennials and Marriage.” “They have the reality of the Bible that’s pressing down on them and the reality of culture, and those are competing forces right now that are vying for their allegiance.”

Differing opinions on homosexuality recently split a Southern Baptist church in La Mirada, a town outside Los Angeles, after the pastor told his congregation he had changed his position on homosexuality and gay marriage.

Danny Cortez, who was ordained as a Southern Baptist pastor 21 years ago, began to re-examine the church’s stance on gay marriage after a lesbian church member decided she had to leave the congregation when she entered a relationship.

“I began realizing that the church was marginalizing a group of people,” he said. “I no longer saw the traditional understanding of scripture as valid,” he said. He told his family last year, and his son, then 15, came out to him as gay.

Mr. Cortez said he expected to be fired after informing his congregation of about 100 of his changed beliefs. Instead, members of the New Heart Community Church deliberated for months. This year, 60 percent of them voted to keep him and become a “third way” church, meaning they would stay together even though not all agreed with the pastor. Others left and joined other congregations.

Several weeks ago, the church was ejected from the SBC, meaning it can’t

donate to the SBC or vote at annual meetings.

SBC President Ronnie Floyd told the Baptist Press last month the move was a matter of conviction and didn’t reflect a lack of compassion for New Heart or homosexuals. New Heart has “walked away from us as Southern Baptists,” he said. “We have not walked away from them.”

“It’s been a painful process,” Mr. Cortez said. “We’re trying to heal.” Mr. Cortez said his church now welcomes openly gay members, and he recently officiated at his first same-sex wedding. “Times are changing,” he said. “Even among evangelicals.”

But many evangelicals show no signs of changing their traditional beliefs. When World Vision, an evangelical relief organization, said in March it would hire people in same-sex marriages, it quickly reversed itself after receiving heavy criticism.

At the time, the SBC’s Mr. Moore said: “We’re entering an era where we will see who the evangelicals really are.”

—Tamara Audi

*The Wall Street Journal*

October 27, 2014

If homosexuals get their way, Pastor Donald Knapp won’t be behind the pulpit — he’ll be behind bars. That’s the stunning development in Idaho, where the day liberals promised would never come is already here. Two ministers — a husband and wife team — have been told by their city government that refusing to “marry” a same-sex couple will send them straight to jail.

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prisoned for their faith. Like the flood of state amendments steamrolled by activist judges, Idaho’s fell earlier this month. And with it, religious liberty. Fearing the worst, the Knapps reached out to Alliance Defending Freedom, concerned that their chapel would be targeted. Less than a week later, the battle was at their front door.

For Donald and Evelyn, there was never any question what the duo would do. Unapologetically Christian, the husband-and-wife team is overtly religious, marrying couples with faith-driven vows, and even offering marriage sermons on CD to newlyweds. That doesn’t matter to city officials, who had this marriage message for The Hitching Post: Conform or be punished. And not just any punishment, but 180 days in jail and up to \$1,000 in fines for every day the ministers refuse to perform the ceremony.

“Right now,” said attorney Jeremy Tedesco, “they are at risk of being prosecuted. The threat of enforcement is more than just credible.” Unlike bakery owner Jack Phillips, who Colorado bullied with similar charges, the Knapps are both ministers. And while their chapel is considered a “religious corporation,” even it isn’t safe from the same-sex “wedding” march that threatens to put the First Amendment asunder.

FRC warned this moment was coming, but even we didn’t expect the government to move this quickly. “The other side insisted this would never happen — that pastors would not have to perform same-sex marriages,” ADF’s Tedesco told Fox News’ Todd Starnes. “The reality is — it’s already happening.” Government officials are making it clear that they’ll use their power to punish anyone



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who opposes the agenda of homosexual activists. It's a scary turnaround for a nation founded on the same free exercise of religion, which is now punishable by six months in prison. When there are plenty of other options for homosexuals seeking a marriage license, why should they be able to use the power of government to force Christians to participate?

Eugene Volokh, in today's *Washington Post*, tries to tackle this Left's conundrum and agrees that there's no way around the obvious: Somebody's rights have to give. "Compelling ministers to speak words in ceremonies that they think are immoral is an unconstitutional speech compulsion. Given that the Free Speech Clause bars the government from requiring public school students to say the pledge of allegiance ... the government can't require ministers — or other private citizens — to speak the words in a ceremony, on pain of either having to close their business or face fines and jail time."

Remember when President Obama sat down and told ABC News that "churches and other faith institutions are still gonna be able to make determinations about what their sacraments are — what they recognize"? Neither does he. Or, for that matter, the rest of his party, which is lighting the same-sex unity candle with the same match it's taking to the Constitution.

—Tony Perkins  
Washington Update  
October 20, 2014

## Transgenderism

What to believe: the Bible or certain kinds of data? Let's think about three types of situations.

Sometimes the limited data we have

appears to contradict God's command. Chapter 3 of Genesis states, "The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise." So she ate, despite God's command not to. The consequences were severe.

Sometimes social scientists say we don't have enough data — for example, what are the long-term effects of gay couples raising kids? Here we have to choose between believing what the Bible says about homosexuality or believing what is proclaimed at the high places — media, academia and the courts — of American culture.

Sometimes, though, we have data but ignore it, unless brave experts remind us of what we know. That's why I'm grateful to Paul McHugh, former psychiatrist-in-chief at Johns Hopkins Hospital, who recently wrote a *Wall Street Journal* column headlined, "Transgender Surgery Isn't the Solution: A drastic physical change doesn't address underlying psycho-social troubles."

McHugh noted that persons who believe they need transgendering are like others who suffer from anorexia or bulimia nervosa and view themselves as blobs even while they become emaciated. Such individuals have disordered self-perception, and so do those who are male but think they are female, or vice versa.

The good news (we don't hear it from transgender advocates) is that the disorder usually goes away. McHugh: "When children who reported transgender feelings were tracked without medical or surgical treatment at both Vanderbilt University and London's

Portman Clinic, 70 percent to 80 percent of them spontaneously lost those feelings."

McHugh became an expert on transgendering because Johns Hopkins in the 1960s became the first American medical center to do "sex-reassignment surgery." Hopkins later compared the psycho-social adjustment of patients who had surgery with those of similar leanings who did not, and found the former no better off than the latter. The hospital then stopped doing sex-assignment surgery: Why amputate normal organs if the results aren't beneficial?

A long-term study conducted at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden and published in 2011 gave us more data. Researchers followed 324 people who had sex-reassignment surgery and learned that about a decade after their operations, the transgendered began to experience increasing mental difficulties. That study's overall conclusion: "Persons with transsexualism, after sex reassignment, have considerably higher risks for mortality, suicidal behavior, and psychiatric morbidity than the general population."

McHugh wrote acidly of those who hurt transgender claimants "by treating their confusions as a right in need of defending rather than as a mental disorder that deserves understanding, treatment, and prevention." He also criticized "misguided doctors" who administer "puberty-delaying hormones to render later sex-change surgeries less onerous — even though the drugs stunt the children's growth and risk causing sterility. Given that close to 80 percent of such children would abandon their confusion and grow naturally into adult life if untreated, these medical interven-

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tions come close to child abuse.”

So let’s review uses of sociological and psychological data. When we don’t have it, what is culturally trendy wins. When we do have it, what is culturally trendy usually wins. I’m not saying we should ignore data, but we shouldn’t idolize it. We should look to the Bible and also take into account the lessons of history.

—Marvin Olasky  
*World Magazine*  
October 4, 2014

## Islam

My first stop was the third-century village of Sednaya, the most holy Christian city in Syria, where Aramaic, the tongue of Jesus Christ, is still the dominant language. A nun showed me into a chapel, where a portrait of the Virgin Mary, said to have been painted by the Apostle Luke, held special powers for both Christian and Muslim young women unable to have children. Here, prayer would enable them to conceive a child. Sednaya, and the icon, had been the cause of Christian miracles for centuries, and would presumably continue to be for centuries more.

But it is not to be. Muslim extremists, intent on destroying everything that is not to their liking, have this year simply liquidated Sednaya. According to one press report, “the ancient monastery church and side chapels were stripped completely of their priceless religious icons and other religious objects were urinated and defecated upon. Christian villagers who were caught in the midst of the rebel assault had their throats slit, or were shot execution-style at close range.”

Maalula, just a few miles farther

north, is a beautiful little ancient Christian village, built into a gorge, with several third- and fourth-century churches, orphanages, and retreat centers. Aramaic is the principal language, these two villages being among the very few places in the world where the language of Jesus is still spoken. At the top of the hill is the monastery St. Sergius, named for a Roman officer who was martyred in the fourth century for refusing to renounce his Christian faith. A Catholic priest from Lebanon engaged me, in passable English, in a lengthy discussion about early Christianity; appropriate, as he told me that our conversation was taking place in perhaps the oldest Christian church in the world. The semicircular stone church altar predates the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.); after Nicaea, altars were rectangular. And, he explained, the little stone lip around the altar caught the blood of sacrificed lambs in pagan ceremonies before the birth of Christ. The little church exuded peacefulness and quiet, and I got the sense that it would probably remain unchanged forever.

Unfortunately, not so. According to a *London Telegraph* story earlier this year, Maalula was “liberated” by the Islamists, many of its inhabitants, among the few souls still speaking the language of Jesus, were assassinated and the rest fled. Shellfire breached the limestone walls of the oldest Christian church in the world and, inside what had long been seen as a symbol of Syria’s religious freedom, broken icons lay on the ground alongside crosses, catechisms, and images of the Virgin Mary.

The Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. George was just a few miles from the Crusader castle Krak des Chevalier

where, according to legend, St. George is buried. Among the buildings in the complex was a 13th-century chapel, still intact and in good repair, and another built in 515 A.D. was also amazingly well preserved. The 20 or so monks, all in their 20s and 30s, were overjoyed at having an English-speaking guest and gathered around, after evening prayers, to practice their English and speak of their faith. The place had a peacefulness and quiet about it that made it seem almost part of another world.

The monastery was attacked in August of last year by jihadist terrorists, but defended by local Christian volunteers, many of whom were killed. During Holy Week this year, a school on the monastery grounds was attacked with gunfire and mortars leaving several children and teachers dead or wounded. It is just a matter of time before it meets the same fate as Sednaya and Maalula.

A couple of days later, in Aleppo, I had lunch with Metropolitan Gregorios Johanna Ibrahim, the Syriac-Orthodox archbishop of Aleppo. A worldly and strong-willed man in his 60s, with a graduate degree from the University of Bristol in England, he was authoritative and gracious; nearly everybody who passed the table, Muslims and Christians alike, stopped to greet him and exchange hugs. As we parted, we agreed that we would no doubt see each other again sometime.

It won’t happen. In April 2013, while returning from Turkey with another bishop, his car was attacked by Islamist terrorists, the driver was shot and the two bishops kidnapped. They have not been seen nor heard from since, and are presumed dead.

As Islamist extremists continue to



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terrorize Syria, more Christian villages will be “liberated,” more priceless historical sites destroyed, and many of Syria’s nearly 2 million Christians will be killed. It’s a tragedy for civilization.

—Alfred S. Regnery

*The Washington Times*

October 20, 2014

This week a Canadian Muslim gunman went on a rampage in Ottawa, killing a soldier and storming into the Parliament building before he was shot dead. Authorities have since said he had applied for a passport to travel to Syria. Three Muslim schoolgirls from Colorado were intercepted in Germany apparently on their way to Syria, the base for attacks there and in Iraq by the terrorist group Islamic State, or ISIS. An August 20 article in *Newsweek* estimated that perhaps twice as many British Muslims are fighting for ISIS as are serving in the British army.

What could possibly inspire young Muslims in the West to abandon their suburban middle-class existence and join a holy war? How could teenagers in Denver or anywhere be lured by a jihadist ideology — or are grisly videos of ISIS beheadings and crucifixions not enough of a deterrent?

What is so compelling about radical Islamism may lie within its founding texts. It is time we acknowledged the powerful influence these texts have had even on ordinary Muslims. The political ideology based on them has already dragged the Middle East back toward the Stone Age.

As a teenager growing up in Egypt in the 1980s, I liked to stroll through Cairo’s outdoor book market, fishing out little gems like an Arabic translation

of War and Peace. One day, I stumbled upon a book that shook everything I believed in.

The book was *In the Shadows of the Quran*, Sayyid Qutb’s magnum opus. The Egyptian writer, who died in 1966, remains arguably the most influential thinker in contemporary Muslim societies. He was the principal theorist of the Muslim Brotherhood and the intellectual impetus behind the Islamist parties it spawned. Qutb’s ardent disciples included Osama bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri of al Qaeda. It is not an exaggeration to say that Qutb is to Islamism what Karl Marx is to communism.

Qutb’s brilliance as a theorist was in how he applied Western-style literary criticism to the Quran to interpret God’s intentions. He concluded that the reason for the Muslim world’s decline were external cultural and political influences that diluted Islam: The culprits included everything from Greek empiricism and liberal democracy to socialism, Persian poetry, and Hegelian philosophy. The only path to an Islamic renaissance was to cleanse Muslim societies of these contaminants and restore Islam to its seventh-century purity.

Today, Qutb’s outlook — Islamism — is the dominant political ideology in most Muslim-majority countries, often taking root in vacuums where secular politics have never had space to develop. Polls by the Pew Research Center, such as 2013’s “The World’s Muslims,” indicate that in many Muslim countries, the population is overwhelmingly in favor of veiling for women, the death penalty for leaving Islam, and stoning as punishment for adultery; rabid anti-Semitism is rampant. The few ex-

ceptions to these statistics tend to be countries with a long history of militant secularism (like Turkey), or former communist states (Tajikistan, Bosnia, Albania, etc.) where religion was effectively wiped out of the public sphere. But Islamism is now growing even in those places.

The trend of history is being reversed. In Egypt, for instance, veiling was unheard of 50 years ago and was virtually extinct until the Islamists resurrected the practice in the 1970s. Today, an estimated 90 percent of Egyptian women are veiled. In many other countries, the veil — originally a tribal norm, not a religious one — is now ubiquitous, as are views on apostasy in countries that were far more progressive 50 years ago.

Many of my fellow Muslims are trying to reform Islam from within. Yet our voices are smothered in the West by Islamist apologists and their well-meaning but unwitting allies on the left. For instance, if you try to draw attention to the stark correlation between the rise of Islamic religiosity and regressive attitudes toward women, you’re labeled an Islamophobe.

In America, other contemporary ideologies are routinely and openly debated in classrooms, newspapers, on talk shows, and in living rooms. But Americans make an exception for Islamism. Criticism of the religion — even in abstraction — is conflated with bigotry toward Muslims. There is no public discourse, much less an ideological response, to Islamism, in academia or on Capitol Hill. This trend is creating an intellectual vacuum, where poisonous ideas are allowed to propagate unchecked.

My own experience as a Muslim in

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New York bears this out. Socially progressive, self-proclaimed liberals, who would denounce even the slightest injustice committed against women or minorities in America, are appalled when I express a similar criticism about my own community.

Compare the collective response after each harrowing high-school shooting in America. Intellectuals and public figures look for the root cause of the violence and ask: Why? Yet when I ask why after every terrorist attack, the disapproval I get from my non-Muslim peers is visceral: The majority of Muslims are not violent, they insist, the jihadists are a minority who don't represent Islam, and I am fear-mongering by even wondering aloud.

This is delusional thinking. Even as the world witnesses the barbarity of beheadings, habitual stoning, and severe subjugation of women and minorities in the Muslim world, politicians and academics lecture that Islam is a "religion of peace." Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia routinely beheads women for sorcery and witchcraft.

In the U.S., we Muslims are handled like exotic flowers that will crumble if our faith is criticized — even if we do it ourselves. Meanwhile, Republicans and Democrats alike would apparently prefer to drop bombs in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and beyond, because killing Muslims is somehow less offensive than criticizing their religion? Unfortunately, you can't kill an idea with a bomb, and so Islamism will continue to propagate. Muslims must tolerate civilized public debate of the texts and scripture that inform Islamism. To demand any less of us is to engage in the soft bigotry of low expectations.

—Aly Salem

*The Wall Street Journal*

October 26, 2014

## Atheism

In his new book *Waking Up*, neuroscientist and popular atheist Sam Harris recounts that "a feeling of peace came over me" as he followed in Jesus' footsteps on a hill by the Sea of Galilee, and it "soon grew to a blissful stillness that silenced my thoughts. In an instant, the sense of being a separate self — an 'I' or a 'me' — vanished."

Mr. Harris doesn't use religious terms, but his musings about meditating on a mountaintop have left some fans wondering what happened to the pugilistic author of *The End of Faith* and *Letter to a Christian Nation*, which declared that "faith is nothing more than the license religious people give to one another to keep believing when reasons fail."

Mr. Harris isn't the only one who has changed his tone. The atheist Richard Dawkins recently devoted an entire book, *The Magic of Reality*, to showing how scientific inquiry has made sense of the seemingly miraculous — from rainbows to the origins of the universe. The discoveries of science, Mr. Dawkins writes, offer as much wonder and life satisfaction as religious belief. The evolutionary biologist and atheist Olivia Judson calls "the knowledge that we evolved a source of solace and hope."

Since when are these well-known atheists so concerned with consolation and connection, with solace and hope? Mr. Dawkins and his fellow atheists were famous for their zingers dismissing religion. The title of the late journal-

ist and outspoken atheist Christopher Hitchens' 2007 book sums it up: *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*.

The kinder, gentler atheism echoes a striking shift in religious culture. Millennials — Americans born after 1980 — were not even a gleam in their parents' eyes in 1976 when Mr. Dawkins published *The Selfish Gene*, a textbook for the mainstream atheist movement. Millennials are a promising audience for atheists, as nearly a third of them are religiously unaffiliated (compared to 20 percent of all Americans, and 9 percent of those 65 and older), according to a 2012 Pew Research Center study. But Millennials are much less interested in debates over evolutionary theory, which most see as settled, than in the puzzles of existence: Why do we experience beauty as transcendent and suffering as somehow wrong? What is our purpose?

In the past, atheists tended to dismiss the intangible sources of meaning in our lives, as when the Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson famously defined ethics as "an illusion fobbed off on us by our genes to get us to cooperate." Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker suggested in his 1997 book *How the Mind Works* that our sense of beauty in nature is simply "the mechanism that drove our ancestors into suitable habitats." The new popular atheism is taking these mysteries of consciousness much more seriously.

If a system of beliefs is true, or at least plausibly true, it should help its adherents to better navigate our world. This is why testimonials are so central to nearly every religion or system of thought. The Meditations of Roman



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Emperor Marcus Aurelius extolled the benefits of the ancient Stoics' approach to living. Christians read Augustine's Confessions or the biblical account of St. Paul's defense of his faith before a Roman judge, and testify to one another about how their own conversion has transformed their lives. At a Jewish Passover, the youngest child prompts a collective testimonial by asking, "What makes this night different than any other?"

Messrs. Harris and Dawkins and other atheists seem to have recognized the essential role of testimonials. Their recent books reflect this, as does a wave of other recent essays extolling the consolation and connection possible for an atheist. "You have to trust that your individual life is linked to something bigger," as Kristin Dombek, a columnist for the trendy literary journal *n+1*, recently put it: "that you belong, body and soul, to a larger story for which you are responsible."

So far the testimonials seem to be limited to a handful of atheist intellectuals in the West, but they could spread. Perhaps stories will soon pop up about how a reader in China pulled her life out of a ditch after reading *Waking Up*, or how a man in Africa was once blind but now sees thanks to the power of the atheist explanation of our existence.

Even those of us who doubt there will be a great atheist awakening, and are skeptical of atheistic attempts to explain what consciousness, beauty, and our longing for justice mean, can agree that Messrs. Harris and Dawkins and their peers have taken an essential step. They are no longer simply trying to poke holes in the religious beliefs of

ordinary Americans. They have now offered a testable claim: that an atheist theory of reality can offer the same consolation and connection that religion has provided from the beginning of human history.

— David Skeel

*The Wall Street Journal*

October 23, 2014

## Darwinism

HOUSTON — A prominent chemist who was recognized this year as one of the 50 most influential scientists in the world says most scientists do not understand how evolution could explain the existence of life.

Dr. James Tour is a well-known professor at Rice University, specializing in chemistry, nanoengineering, and computer science. Over the last 30 years, Tour has authored over 500 research publications, and he was recognized as one of "The 50 Most Influential Scientists in the World Today" by TheBestSchools.org. Tour has also received awards and recognitions from the American Chemical Society, Thomson Reuters, Honda, NASA, and others.

In a video released in late 2012, Tour explained that he has had extensive experience studying the origin of life.

"I will tell you as a scientist and a synthetic chemist," Tour said, "if anybody should be able to understand evolution, it is me, because I make molecules for a living, and I don't just buy a kit, and mix this and mix this, and get that. I mean, *ab initio*, I make molecules. I understand how hard it is to make molecules."

Despite his experiences and expertise, Tour admits that he does not understand how evolution could account for life's existence.

"I don't understand evolution, and I will confess that to you," he says in the video. "Is it OK for me to say, 'I don't understand this'? Is that all right? I know that there's a lot of people out there that don't understand anything about organic synthesis, but they understand evolution. I understand a lot about making molecules; I don't understand evolution. And you would just say that, wow, I must be really unusual."

However, Tour says he is not the only one who does not understand how life could have arisen through natural, unguided processes.

"Let me tell you what goes on in the back rooms of science — with National Academy members, with Nobel Prize winners," Tour stated. "I have sat with them, and when I get them alone, not in public — because it's a scary thing, if you say what I just said — I say, 'Do you understand all of this, where all of this came from, and how this happens?'"

The answer he inevitably receives, Tour explained, is: "no."

"Every time that I have sat with people who are synthetic chemists, who understand this, they go, 'Uh-uh. Nope,'" Tour said. "And if they're afraid to say 'yes,' they say nothing. They just stare at me, because they can't sincerely do it."

Tour says there is an important distinction between microevolution and macroevolution — the former is clearly observable and repeatable, but the latter has never been witnessed.

"From what I can see, microevolution is a fact; we see it all around us regarding small changes within a species, and biologists demonstrate this procedure in their labs on a daily basis. Hence, there is no argument regarding microevolution," he wrote in a blog post. "The core of the

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debate for me, therefore, is the extrapolation of microevolution to macroevolution.”

After recognizing that evolutionists are “collectively bewildered” by life’s origins, Tour joined nearly 900 other scientists in signing *A Scientific Dissent From Darwinism*, which states: “We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged.”

If evolution cannot account for life’s existence, then how did life originate? Tour says the most reasonable answer is simple.

“I believe fundamentally that God created us all,” he told the *Houston Chronicle*.

— Garrett Haley  
Christian News  
October 13, 2014

## Political Campaigns

As Hillary and Bill Clinton prepare for another White House ramble, the country is fated to endure more than a few 1990s flashbacks, often including attempts to whitewash the real history. The latest character to re-emerge is Monica Lewinsky, the former intern who is doffing her beret to reinvent herself as an anti-cyberbullying activist.

In a speech this week at a *Forbes* magazine conference that went viral on the web, Ms. Lewinsky describes herself as a “survivor” of online abuse — she became “the creature from the media lagoon.” As the worst abusers, she cited Matt Drudge and the *New York Post*, which gave Ms. Lewinsky a term of tabloid endearment as “the portly pepperpot.” Another culprit was “a politically

motivated independent prosecutor,” or Ken Starr.

The problem is that Ms. Lewinsky was actually the victim of the Clinton lagoon, as White House operatives tried to destroy her reputation when the scandal broke. The real bullies weren’t online but in the West Wing.

On January 21, 1998, Mr. Clinton told his aide Sidney Blumenthal that Ms. Lewinsky “came on to me and made a sexual demand on me,” according to Mr. Blumenthal’s deposition to Mr. Starr. Mr. Clinton added that he “rebuffed her” and then she “threatened him. She said that she would tell people they’d had an affair, that she was known as the stalker among her peers, and that she hated it and if she had an affair or said she had an affair then she wouldn’t be the stalker any more.”

Mr. Blumenthal then repeated this tale to anyone in the press corps who would listen, and the “stalker” smear soon made it into multiple media reports under the authority of “a White House source.” Mrs. Clinton for her part described Ms. Lewinsky as “a narcissistic loony toon,” as the first lady’s friend Diane Blair recounted in the personal papers archive opened in 2010 by the University of Arkansas library.

Meanwhile, Mr. Clinton fanned out across the talk shows to deny that he had any romantic or otherwise improper relationship, which he continued to insist until he was forced to admit his lies by the blue DNA dress. Then the Clintons flipped to attacking the respected jurist Mr. Starr as a rabid partisan. Mr. Clinton was impeached for obstruction of justice and lying under oath, and he later was stripped of his law license.

We correct the record not least to

point out that the Clintons weren’t above falsely smearing a young woman not much older than their daughter as an oversexed psycho blackmailer. Since Ms. Lewinsky brought it up, we also wonder what the modern feminists applauding her address think about men in positions of power publicly shaming a female subordinate without her consent.

But the story is especially instructive for what it reveals about the Clinton family mores of saying or doing whatever it takes to win. Mr. Blumenthal and the rest of the Clinton menagerie are rested and ready for another run at political power. As the 2016 election nears, Americans should be prepared for more attempts to rewrite 1990s history.

—An Affair to Remember  
*The Wall Street Journal*  
October 23, 2014

## Socialism/Higher Education

“Harvard has been the source of socialist penetration long before the Bolshevik revolution. W.E.B. DuBois, the current Negro favorite of the Kremlin, emerged as a full-fledge socialist from Harvard in 1890. Harry F. Ward acquired his socialism in Harvard before 1898. There were many such instances of individual indoctrination before the turn of the century.”

—*Keynes at Harvard*, p.11

“After the year 1900, the pattern at Harvard followed the general evolution of social-communism in the Western world. Among the most virulent radical groups in Harvard were the Fabian Socialists. Felix Frankfurter, Harvard Law School in 1906, Walter Lippman, Harvard ’10, Roger N. Baldwin ’05, Stuart Chase ’10 were some of the Fabians in

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Harvard during that period. British Fabian lecturers taught at Harvard: Graham Wallas (about 1910), Bertrand Russell (1914), and Harold Laski (1918). Professors and teachers of leftist persuasion, aided by professional agitators, organized extremist groups among students and faculty. These in turn infiltrated established student organizations and the Harvard administrative apparatus.”

—Ibid

“The Bolshevik Revolution whipped the socialist ranks into a ferment. Young radicals like John Reed (Harvard ’10) joined the Bolshevik movement outright. Large segments of the Fabian Socialist and Marxist Socialist groups broke away to help form the Communist Party of the United States. Others remained socialists, enjoying the cover of respectability while secretly sympathizing with the Bolsheviks.”

—Ibid

“Harvard became a pink and red hotbed.”

—Ibid, p. 12

“Alger Hiss [Harvard Law School] was a Communist and may still be one.”

—Whittaker Chambers  
*Witness*, p. 711

“The simple fact is that when I took up my little sling and aimed at Communism, I also hit something else. What I hit was the forces of that great socialist revolution, which, in the name of liberalism, spasmodically, incompletely, somewhat formlessly, but always in the same direction, has been inching its ice cap over the nation for two decades. This is not a charge. My opinion of that revolution in whole or in part, and, consciously or unconsciously, a majority of

the nation has so voted for years. It was the forces of that revolution that I struck at the point of its struggle for power.”

—Whittaker Chambers  
*Witness*, p. 741, 742

“There were more self-declared communists on the Harvard faculty than there were republicans.”

—Ted Cruz  
*World Magazine*  
November 7, 2009, p. 25

“What was this ‘promise’ [President] Obama incessantly invokes when speaking and writing about his father? It was communism. This was the Luo ‘promise’ to Africa, the vision revealed in Barak Hussein Obama Sr.’s academic attainment. It was, and is, a virulently anti-capitalist, anti-Western, and anti-American brand of socialism — one that meshed comfortably with the elder Obama’s Muslim roots.”

—Andrew C. McCarthy  
*The Grand Jihad*, p. 189

“No boots on the ground? No military strategy? Trust your enemies and diss your allies? Spokespersons for the president could have been lip-synched by denizens of his alma mater [Harvard Law School]. That Mr. Obama has no use for the other side of the aisle is the logical extension of a university that has purged all but a handful of conservatives from its faculty — and has done so in the name of achieving a greater diversity.”

—Ruth R. Wisse  
*The Wall Street Journal*  
October 21, 2014, p. A 13

The University of Chicago has done something bold and wonderful — may it be a precedent. The university canceled its Confucius Institute. Confucius Insti-

tutes are learning centers that are funded, staffed, and controlled by the Chinese Communist Party. The institutes are on hundreds of campuses in free countries around the world. The institutes exist to advance the CCP’s interests — they are its “soft power.” Earlier this year, more than 100 faculty members at Chicago signed a petition objecting to the Confucius Institute on their campus. The university’s administration apparently reassured the Chinese officials responsible. The officials then boasted that they had brought Chicago to heel. This must have been awkward for the administration. Now Chicago has broken, saying that Chinese authorities made it impossible to have an “equal partnership.” That is true of Confucius Institutes in every place. Again, may Chicago, in its boldness, have set a precedent.

—*National Review*  
October 20, 2014, p. 10

Vladimir Putin does what he can to commemorate the Soviet Union. Communist nostalgia comes easily and often to him. In those good old days, a secret policeman like him could get on with the job, and no questions asked. Felix Dzerzhinsky was the old-timer who, after the Bolshevik Revolution, made the secret police the real power in the land. “We represent in ourselves organized terror.” Iron Felix boasted as he ordered the summary execution of tens of thousands of victims. After his death, the Dzerzhinsky Division was an elite police unit named in his honor with the wide remit of keeping public order. In 1994, the reforming Boris Yeltsin tried to drop grim historical associations by giving the unit a cumbersome identity as the Independent Operational Purpose Division.



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It's an irony that Yeltsin chose Putin as his successor, and Putin has restored the former name of this unit. The clock goes back a little.

—*National Review*

October 20, 2014, p. 11

## Education

On a crisp-as-an-apple-slice autumn afternoon in Chicago, a man named Ty-lus Allen looked around a softly lighted chapel and said, "When I first came here, it was because I heard this was where people were willing to help you."

He is 24 now, a clerk at a downtown hospital. When he began evening visits to the Fourth Presbyterian Church, he was a fifth-grader who lived many grim miles away. His father was in prison. He was a boy who yearned to learn, to better himself, but wasn't sure how. "I was hoping to find people who wouldn't give up on me," he said.

He came to the right place. The church, on a postcard-glamorous North Michigan Avenue corner, has, for 50 years, provided a tutoring program for children as young as first graders. Most of the boys and girls, often from the city's poorest and most violent neighborhoods, are African-American. Most of the volunteer tutors are white, many of them professional men and women.

On this afternoon, hundreds of them — former pupils like Mr. Allen, current pupils, present and past tutors — were gathering at the church to celebrate half a century of lives made better. The premise of what goes on there on weeknights is simple: The children seek one-on-one help with the basics of mathematics and reading and writing. They don't always get that kind of individual attention in

their public schools. There are successful men and women willing to sit down with them at the church and share what they have always taken for granted: the ability to add and subtract and divide, the ability to spell and to read with understanding.

I first reported on the church's tutoring program 25 years ago, and then, as now, I was most struck by the devotion on both sides. On the coldest Chicago winter nights, in drenching rain and biting winds, the children would arrive for their tutoring sessions right on time. So would the volunteer tutors. Attendance was typically 100 percent.

"At first, the children don't even know exactly what they're hoping for," said Stefani Turken, who is in her 22nd year of tutoring. "But little by little, they see that there is a different world available to them, that they can dream of something better. That if you want it to, life can change."

Tamatha Webster, a single mother from Chicago's West Side, said she enrolled her daughter in the tutoring program — it has always been free of charge — when the girl was 6. "She was going to a school where there was so much disruption in classes — children being rude and disrespectful to the teachers. She was trying to block all that out, and learn, but it was very hard."

Most of the tutors, not all of whom are church members, have just finished a full day at work. "We never start by just opening the books," said Jon Findley, a bank data-base manager who has been volunteering for 24 years. "These kids bring their day with them. So you listen. It's important that they know someone wants to hear about their lives. I don't

want to be another person who lets them down."

Since the program started in 1964 — one night a week, that first year, in the church basement — more than 6,000 children have been taught. Now tutoring is available four nights a week. The children who journey downtown from some of the city's bleakest, most dangerous neighborhoods could be excused for complaining about the hard life has dealt them. But complaining is easy; working to better oneself is hard. The volunteers could be excused — even commended — if they chose only to give money to charities instead. But writing a check is easy; being the person who does something — the one who shows up — is hard.

The rewards, though, are lasting. Tamatha Webster's daughter no longer has to struggle to learn in chaotic classrooms. She has been a faithful attendee on tutoring nights for seven years now and because of her intelligence and diligent work has been awarded a scholarship to one of Chicago's finest private schools.

Her name is Brenna. She said that one of the happiest moments in her life was when, during her first year of tutoring, she finished in second place in a spelling bee, with her mother watching. Brenna aspires to become a pediatrician.

During her early years in the program, she said, on blizzardy days at her public elementary school she would look out the window at the swirling snow. "I told myself that no matter what, I was going to make it to tutoring that night," she said. "I hoped it wouldn't be snowed out. There was never a time that I didn't get there. And there was never a time

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when they weren't there waiting."

—Bob Greene  
*Wall Street Journal*  
October 9, 2014

The teachers' union in Jefferson County, Colo., has been fighting with a "hostile" school board for months, over the usual issues: Teachers want more money and less accountability, and the school board wants to offer them the opposite. That is a difficult position for the unions to market to the public, and so a cultural issue has been invented: Teachers are holding a "sick-out" to protest the allegedly heavy-handed interference of the school board with the curriculum. The board, charged by law with reviewing curricular changes, wishes to review the new Advanced Placement U.S. History program, a controversial set of recommendations shaped in part by far-left academics. The College Board itself has on several occasions insisted that final details are in the hands of local school boards. The school board's determination to do its duty has led to reckless cries of censorship and — irony of ironies — complaints about politicizing the curriculum. Students have joined teachers in walking out. In a great many high-school curricula, the history of these United States begins with the Middle Passage and ends with the Triangle Shirtwaist fire, and it's not unreasonable for a Colorado school-board member to voice concerns that the AP standards downplay the "positive aspects" of U.S. history (liberty, democracy, prosperity, saving the world from fascism once or twice). But this is really a protest about bank accounts, not historical accounts, and the students are being suckered.

—*National Review*  
October 20, 2014 p. 11

## Capital Punishment & Physician Assisted Suicide

Belgium is on the verge of executing its first murderer by lethal injection. Well, not exactly "executing." The state isn't going to kill convicted murderer/rapist Frank Van Den Bleeken for his crimes. Rather, it is helping him be euthanized. By a doctor. At a hospital. To which he was transferred after a court ruled that Den Bleeken's request to end the suffering caused by his imprisonment (he has served 30 years of a life sentence) and continuing violent sexual urges fits snugly within that country's euthanasia law.

Ironically, Belgium opposes capital punishment under any circumstances. But it legalized euthanasia in 2002. Since then, the country has fallen off a moral cliff, with a growing number of lethal injections administered by doctors not just to the dying, but also to those with severe mental illnesses, crippling disabilities, and chronic, nonterminal illnesses. There have been several medicalized joint killings of elderly couples who would rather die together than live apart. Belgium even permits euthanasia followed by organ harvesting and the assisted suicide of dying children if they make the request in writing (among other requirements). Killing a prisoner who would rather be dead than imprisoned is merely the next logical step.

Meanwhile, U.S. opponents of capital punishment claim that death by lethal injection is "cruel and unusual punishment." Thus, California is prohibited by federal court order from using lethal injection protocols because doing so might cause pain. More recently, a federal judge has ruled that California's

death penalty itself is cruel and unusual punishment, and therefore unconstitutional — because it is almost never carried out!

The lethal-injection-as-cruel-and-unusual-punishment meme was furthered earlier this year after two "botched" executions — one in Arizona that took 97 minutes to complete, another in Oklahoma that took 43 minutes. The ACLU lawsuits are flying.

Interestingly, the death drug used in euthanasia/assisted suicide is the same one used in executions. Moreover, studies from the Netherlands — where euthanasia was decriminalized in 1973 and legalized in 2002 — have found that physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia by lethal injection can — as in the Arizona and Oklahoma executions — take considerable time and cause side effects such as vomiting, gasping for air, and seizures. These documented difficulties interfere with the "death with dignity" narrative used to justify the legalization of doctor-assisted suicide — and so are underplayed by its proponents.

Execution has been further entwined with doctor-assisted suicide through the international campaign to prevent executions by drying up the supply of the killing agent, pentobarbital (Nembutal). Oregon and Washington's assisted-suicide regimens became collateral damage after the campaign made the lethal drug unobtainable.

In Oregon, many assisted suicides are facilitated by the state's branch of Compassion & Choices, a private group once more honestly named the Hemlock Society. The organization became so alarmed at the death drug dearth that its representatives met with the Oregon

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Board of Pharmacy to discuss establishing a nonprofit compounding pharmacy to manufacture a generic form of pentobarbital, which C&C would then distribute for use in assisted suicides. So far, no news on whether the state will go along.

Then there is Oregon governor John Kitzhaber. A medical doctor, Kitzhaber strongly favors giving cancer patients access to lethal doses of pentobarbital. But use it on vicious murderers? Absolutely not! That offends his liberal moral code.

Apparently believing that his own sensibilities matter more than the votes of the state's citizens — who overturned a court ban and reinstated the death penalty in 1984 — Kitzhaber placed a moratorium on executions for the balance of his time in office.

But Kitzhaber's reprieve did not sit well with convicted murderer Gary Haugen, who has waived all appeals and wants to be done with life. He sued to be executed, gaining an initial ruling that he has the right to refuse mercy. But that decision was overturned on appeal on the grounds that Kitzhaber has the untrammelled power, as governor, to prevent executions — a decision the Oregon supreme court recently refused to review. So, at least until Kitzhaber is out of office, Haugen is stuck in limbo on death row — unable to die but not wanting to live.

And we are stuck with a paradox: The use of lethal drugs in executions amounts to cruel and unusual punishment, while the use of the same lethal drugs to eliminate someone sick, or sick of life, is “death with dignity.”

Call it “cruel and unusual death with dignity.”

— Wesley J. Smith  
*The Weekly Standard*  
October 27, 2014