

# FLAWED SURVEY DEMONIZES CHRISTIANS

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A new poll on LGBT rights has been published by the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI), a left-wing outfit with a reputation for crafting politically skewed surveys. Its most prominent researcher, sociologist Robert P. Jones, is well known for demonizing so-called Christian nationalists.

PRRI recently released its 2023 American Values Atlas report, "Views On LGBTQ Rights In All 50 States." It offers more proof that the aforementioned flaws are extant. As a sociologist and a Catholic leader, I have great interest in this subject.

First a word about LGBT people (there is no need to add a "Q"—it stands for Queers and is therefore a redundancy).

The typical LGBT person is a young Democrat with no religious affiliation. This makes perfect sense.

Transgenderism, the ideology that falsely holds that the sexes are interchangeable, is a culturally induced phenomenon that is more attractive to young people than older Americans. Democrats are mostly liberals, and as such they have an expansive view of sexuality. Secular-minded persons reject nature, and nature's God, and are therefore easy bait for transgender influencers.

To put it differently, the older a person is, the less likely he is to buy into this mad idea. Republicans tend to be conservatives and are therefore more immune to trendy fashions unhinged from reality. Religious Americans appreciate nature, and nature's God, and are thus inhospitable to militant secular ideas.

There are two aspects of the survey that deserve a riposte.

One of the questions asked respondents was whether they supported or opposed “allowing a small business owner in your state to refuse to provide products or services to gay or lesbian people if doing so would violate their religious beliefs.”

This is a dishonest question. In fact, it is a red herring designed to make religious persons look intolerable.

It is dishonest because PRRI knows that this issue, which was broached in two similar Colorado cases that wound up in the Supreme Court, had nothing do to with denying homosexuals products or services because of their sexual orientation. It had to do with the religious rights of Christians being violated for having to *affirm conduct* they could not in good conscience do.

Neither Jack Phillips nor Lorie Smith ever denied serving a customer who was gay or lesbian. Phillips sold them cakes and Smith serviced their websites. But when Phillips was asked to personally inscribe a wedding cake for two men, he refused. Smith issued a preemptive strike by publicly stating that she would not provide web services celebrating gay weddings. The high court agreed with them, noting the obvious religious liberty issues involved.

PRRI, following Jones’ obsession with Christian nationalism, claims that those who believe that America was founded as a Christian nation and should return to its moorings are a threat to democracy.

If someone were to say that America was founded as a secular nation and should become even more secular, would it be fair to say that this person is a threat to democracy? Of course not. One may disagree, but to assert that we are on the verge of a despotic secular regime would be as irresponsible as saying that Christian nationalists are about to establish a

theocracy.

PRRI is not simply reporting survey results—it is setting the political table for liberals.

For example, Politico, a mostly responsible liberal media outlet, seems to go off the rails when it comes to Christian nationalism. Last month it maintained that if Trump wins in November, his allies are ready to infuse Christian nationalism in his second administration. It claimed to have the evidence to buttress its position, yet it conceded that “The documents obtained by Politico do not outline specific Christian nationalist policies.” That’s because there are none.

Heidi Przybyla wrote a piece for Politico last month that set off the alarms. The issue was the conviction, shared by millions of Americans, and encoded in the Declaration of Independence, that our rights come from God, not from government (that was what Stalin, Hitler and Mao believed). This simple observation was enough to send her into orbit. Now it would have come as a shocker to Jefferson, who was not exactly a religious guy, that he was a Christian nationalist.

PRRI knows what it is doing. None of what they did was a mistake. Which is why they are not to be trusted.

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