

NEW YORK WEIGHS NIXING ADULTERY LAW

[Bill Donohue](#)

“Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery.” The Sixth Commandment has been encoded in civil law throughout the world, and though it has proven to be unenforceable in most instances, it has nonetheless functioned as an example of the law as a teacher: what it taught is the importance of the marriage contract.

Charles Lavine is an Assemblyman from New York, and he wants to rid the law of prohibitions against adultery. Adultery has been a misdemeanor in the state for nearly 120 years, but he thinks it's time to move on. “It's a celebration of someone's concept of their own morality.”

That's a poorly constructed sentence. It is also sociologically illiterate.

Laws against adultery are a recognition of our Christian heritage, and that's not exactly the same as “someone's own concept of their own morality.” It's a cultural statement writ large. But with characteristic arrogance, Lavine thinks we are mature enough now to free ourselves of this ancient taboo.

It would be instructive to learn from Lavine why he thinks laws against adultery have been ubiquitous throughout history.

The late Harry Jaffa, a brilliant Jewish scholar, understood the natural law as well as anyone. He maintained that the institution of marriage was so vital to social wellbeing that acts such as homosexuality, rape, incest and adultery must be rejected. They are wrong because “they are inconsistent with the harmony and good order of the family, which is the foundation of all social harmony and social order, and thereby of all human happiness.”

Feminists such as Boston University law professor Katherine B. Silbaugh are fond of saying that adultery laws were punitive measures aimed at discouraging married women from having extramarital affairs. "Let's just say this: patriarchy."

She is partially right, but her sweeping statement is historically inaccurate.

To be sure, in many parts of the world what she said is true. Among primitive peoples, women were regarded as the property of males, hence the focus of adultery laws on women. In Babylonia civilizations, women who engaged in adultery were put to death, but adulterous men simply paid a fine.

In ancient Greece and Rome, the notion that the wife was the property of the husband was still operative. In Mosaic Law, adultery meant a wife who had sex with a man who was not her husband, but if a married man had sex with a single woman, that was considered fornication, not adultery.

Matters changed under Christianity. Jesus taught that adultery was wrong, independent of the sex of the offender. Therefore, adultery laws that discriminated against the wife were nixed—the immunity enjoyed by the husband came to a screeching halt (Matthew 19: 3-13).

According to one student of this subject, "The church's courts saw no difference in gender and equalized the punishment for a commission of illicit sexual relations outside of a marriage."

Also, it was Christianity that put an end to the loose sexual norms that were countenanced by the Romans. Those strictures privileged men, leaving women in a precarious state. Christian norms placed a premium on monogamy and heterosexual relations, a strong departure from past practices.

Much has changed since as laws against adultery have almost vanished in the western world. It must be conceded that if adultery laws are stricken in New York, no one thinks there

will be an increase in marital cheating. But there is more at stake than this.

Sociologically, it is the vector of change that should concern us. What does the relaxation of laws against adultery portend? And why should we go there?

For example, laws were written against prostitution to protect the institution of marriage: the wife was, and still is, the primary victim; the welfare of children is also jeopardized. But to those like Assemblyman Lavine, laws against prostitution are merely “a celebration of someone’s concept of their own morality.”

There is a reason why an ethic of sexual reticence best serves society—it guards against the promiscuous abuse of the faculty of sex. Sometimes it is best to let sleeping dogs lie.

We are sending this to New York lawmakers and New York bishops.

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VIOLENCE MARKS TRANSGENDER VISIBILITY DAY

Bill Donohue

Transgender Day of Visibility is an international event that is held every year on March 31. This year it falls on Easter Sunday.

Left-wing government officials, led by President Biden and his administration, along with left-wing LGBT activists, led by

the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), will call attention to the heroics of transgender persons. They should instead call attention to their lifestyle, which too often is marked by drugs and violence.

At the end of 2023, HRC listed 32 incidents of transgender persons who died a violent death. It took the occasion to say that "These victims, like all of us, are loving partners, parents, family members, friends and community members. They worked, went to school and attended houses of worship."

Well, not so fast. We [examined](#) each of the 32 cases and found that, while all are tragic, many of the incidents are still open to investigation; there was a lot of random violence. Importantly, there was not one incident that clearly merited the tag "hate crime" (in one instance, the police said it was a possible hate crime).

The fact is that a large portion of the violence was the result of an altercation between the transgender victim and the assailant. Too often the victim was not the kind of model citizen that HRC portrays.

Why was it necessary to get into a confrontation with someone who was innocently "misgendered"? Asking a stranger for sex is not a smart thing to do—it often results in violence. Assaulting a security guard can end in death, as happened in one instance. When an ex-con robs a store and is killed by a security guard, we shouldn't be shocked. When an ex-con shoots at state troopers, that is really stupid. And so on.

Even HRC admits that in more than a third of these cases (36 percent), the killer was a "romantic/sexual partner, friend or family member." We found that in five of these cases, the killer was another transgender person. Which raises the question: Why are these people so violent?

Just looking at the [pictures](#) of these transgender persons who were killed is enough to conclude that they are not just like

the guy next door. That obviously doesn't justify violence. Still, the idyllic portrayal that HRC presents is nonsense.

No innocent person deserves to die a violent death. Unfortunately, in too many cases the transgender persons that HRC mourns were not innocent victims. Their lifestyle is badly in need of a corrective.

SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER IS A HATE GROUP; PART II

Bill Donohue

Part I of this two-part series on the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) focused on six conservative organizations that SPLC falsely labels as "hate groups"; to read it click [here](#). Part II assesses its claim that two genuine hate groups, Antifa and Black Lives Matter, should not be treated as such.

"Designating Antifa as Domestic Terrorist Organization Is Dangerous, Threatens Civil Liberties."

That is how SPLC views Antifa. The evidence shows that its characterization is seriously inaccurate.

Antifa is a loosely-knit group that espouses, and engages in, violence. In July 2019, police shot and killed Willem van Spronsen after he tried to ignite a 500-gallon propane tank attached to a government building in Tacoma, Washington. He was armed with a rifle and incendiary devices. Shortly before the attack he sent a manifesto to friends, saying, "I am antifa." After his death, Antifa colleagues called him "a martyr." Memorials were organized in Washington and Oregon.

A month later, Connor Betts killed nine and injured dozens in a mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio. Though he was not a member of Antifa, he openly supported them on social media.

Mike Isaacson is the founder of an Antifa group in Washington, D.C. He proudly justifies violence. According to Mark Bray, a Dartmouth historian, people like Isaacson justify their use of violence as self-defense against fascists. Their idea of self-defense includes hurling glass bottles and bricks at the police. This has led liberals such as Rep. Nancy Pelosi to condemn Antifa's violence.

Attorney General William Barr, under President Donald Trump, referred to Antifa as a "new form of urban guerrilla warfare," similarly to what Mao Zedong promoted.

Antifa members have been arrested many times for carrying guns, knives, hatchets, gasoline, clubs, chemical irritants, pipes, hammers, fireworks, and homemade explosives.

A Baltimore Antifa activist explained that when peaceful protests don't succeed, you "fight them with fists," and if that doesn't work, you "fight them with knives," and if that fails, you "fight them with guns," and if that doesn't get the job done, you "fight them with tanks."

In 2016, the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI warned state and local officials that Antifa was engaging in "domestic terrorist violence."

Yet SPLC says it is *dangerous* to label Antifa a domestic terrorist group.

"Black Lives Matter Is Not a Hate Group."

After George Floyd was killed by a police officer in 2020, Black Lives Matter (BLM) labeled it a hate crime committed by a white cop, Derek Chauvin. That led to over 600 attacks on 220 American cities.

Yet when the left-wing African-American Minnesota attorney general, Keith Ellison, examined this case, he said it was not a hate crime. "I wouldn't call it that because hate crimes are crimes where there's an explicit motive and bias." He added, "We don't have any evidence that Derek Chauvin factored in George Floyd's race as he did what he did."

This led author David Horowitz to comment, "All the outrage against police racism and all the mayhem fueled by that outrage, was based on no evidence whatsoever."

The fact is that during the 103 days of unrest following the death of Floyd, there were 633 violent protests all across the nation, and BLM was involved in 95 percent of those incidents. The riots were responsible for an estimated two billion dollars in insured property damage and untold more in uninsured property damage. There were twenty-four deaths and countless others who were injured, including many cops.

Yet SPLC says "Black Lives Matter Is Not a Hate Group."

But guess who is a hate group? White Lives Matter. SPLC calls it a white supremacist group, led by a middle-age homemaker, Rebecca Barnette. If she doesn't sound like a violent Antifa or BLM analog on the right, that's because she isn't.

The only violence associated with White Lives Matters occurred years ago when they clashed with counter-protesters in Anaheim, California. White Lives Matter was responsible for stabbing three of them. As it turned out, the five who were arrested were released by the police after it was determined that they acted in self-defense.

Are there things that White Lives Matter has said that are hateful? Yes, and it stands to reason that they should be included in any list of hate groups. But in comparison to BLM, these racists are at least not a violent threat to the social order. They are more kooky than a menace.

SPLC not only unfairly labels respectable social conservative organizations as hate groups, it shamelessly exculpates left-wing violent organizations, defending them as if they were the Boy Scouts.

Worse, the mainstream media cites SPLC's list of hate groups as if it were the Gospel truth. It is for these reasons that the Catholic League concludes that SPLC is a bona-fide hate group—it goes to the mat for true hate groups while smearing those that are not.

As with Part I, we are sending Part II to Washington lawmakers and many other interested parties. It's time SPLC was outed as a dangerous fraud.

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SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER IS A HATE GROUP; Part I

Bill Donohue

There are many radical organizations in the country, but none has achieved a more inflated status than the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). Its undeserved status is due to its perceived expertise in assessing hate groups. While its tracking of hate groups includes some that are undeniably hateful, its list also includes many that are merely conservative organizations who are anything but hateful. By smearing these entities, SPLC is proving that it is the master of hate.

[This is Part I of a two-part series.]

The following organizations are listed by SPLC as hate groups, and the quotes are cited by it as proof that they are a Klan-like organization. Judge for yourself.

Alliance Defending Freedom

“Allowing males to compete in the female category isn’t fair and destroys athletic opportunities. Males will always have inherent physical advantages over comparably talented girls – that’s the reason we have girls’ sports in the first place. And a male’s belief about gender doesn’t eliminate those advantages.” *ADF legal counsel Christiana Holcomb*

“Men who self-identify as women are still biological men. Sure, they can take synthetic hormones to make themselves appear more feminine, style their hair, and wear makeup (or not). But being a woman is more than a physical appearance or a feeling – it is a biological reality.” *Marissa Mayer, senior web writer, on the ADF website*

“The only surprise is the rapidity with which this degradation of our human dignity has occurred. It has occurred, with raging effect, and within twelve months, on the heels of government mandated recognition of same-sex ‘marriage’ – an oxymoronic institution if ever there was one.” *ADF-affiliated attorney Charles LiMandri*

American College of Pediatricians

“Transgenderism is a belief system that increasingly looks like a cultish religion – a modern day Gnosticism denying physical reality for deceived perceptions – being forced on the public by the state in violation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment.” *Andre Van Mol, co-chair of ACPeds’ Committee on Adolescent Sexuality*

“Conditioning children into believing a lifetime of chemical

and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex is normal and healthful is child abuse.” Gender Ideology Harms Children, *ACPeds article*

“Sex is hard-wired from before birth, and it cannot change.” *Michelle Cretella, former president of ACPeds*

Family Research Council

“People with gender dysphoria or transgender identities are more likely than the general public to engage in high-risk behaviors, which may result from or contribute to psychological disorders (or both).” *FRC senior fellow Peter Sprigg*

“I know they’ll mock at the idea, but look, if you are a male – genetically you are a male, biologically you’re a male – and you say, ‘Well, I’m not a male. I’m a female.’ I mean what’s to keep you from saying that you’re an animal?” *Tony Perkins, president*

“By ignoring underlying conditions, the demands of transgender supremacy ignore our unique kids, especially those with autism and mental health diagnoses. They deflect much-needed resources away from the pandemic of autism.” *Sarah Perry, FRC director of partnerships and coalitions coordinator*

Liberty Counsel

“Homosexual conduct can result in significant damage to those involved who engage in such conduct. There is no evidence that a person is born homosexual. And there is evidence that people can change.” *Liberty Counsel website.*

“One of the most significant threats to our freedom is in the area of sexual anarchy with the agenda of the homosexual movement, the so-called LGBT movement. [It] undermines family and the very first building block of our society [and] secondly...it’s a direct assault on our religious freedom and

freedom of speech.” *Mat Staver, president*

“Statistically, sexual promiscuity is increased among those who engage in homosexual conduct, the result of which is disease found predominantly, if not exclusively, among homosexuals.” *Mat Staver*

Pacific Justice Institute

“It is fundamentally unjust for the government to treat some crime victims more favorably than others, just because they are homosexual or transsexual.” *PJI president Brad Dacus*

“Most parents do not want their first through fifth graders bombarded with pro-homosexual messages at school. If LGBT advocates really want to stop name-calling and bullying, they should start with themselves.” *Brad Dacus*

“Forcing boys and girls to share bathrooms, locker rooms and sleeping arrangements is not equality; it is insanity.” *Brad Dacus*

Ruth Institute

“Transgender is a political category. Invented for political purposes. It has nothing to do with either psychology or medicine. It is a political category.” *Jennifer Roback Morse*

“Compared to children raised by their own biological parents, married to each other, children whose parents had a same-sex relationship are at elevated risk for the following...emotional problems, pleading guilty to a non-minor offense, learning disabilities....” *Ruth Institute pamphlet*

“It’s really important to be well informed about what the church actually says about homosexual practice...The church is very clear that same-sex sexual action are intrinsically disordered and can never be morally acceptable.” *Jennifer Roback Morse*

Note: Because of its outsized influence, we are sending our series to Washington lawmakers and many others.

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ACCUSED PRIEST EXONERATED BUT ISSUES REMAIN

[Bill Donohue](#)

In January, Fr. Jerome Kaywell, a priest at Sacred Heart Punta Gorda, in the Diocese of Venice, Florida, was accused of sexual misconduct dating back to the winter of 2013-2014. The accused, whose name has not been made public, was a minor at the time, but is now an adult. When the diocese learned of the accusations, Kaywell was removed from ministry pending an internal review. The authorities were immediately notified.

On February 13, the diocese received a letter from the law firm representing the alleged victim. The accuser withdrew the charges, apologized and blamed the accusation on a “false memory.” On March 14, the diocesan review board concluded that there was no evidence of wrongdoing, and Fr. Kaywell was allowed to resume his ministry.

There are a lot of problems with what happened.

- Why do we know the name of the accused but not the accuser?
- Why did it take a month before the priest was restored to ministry when it is plain that the accuser said the offense never happened?

- Why did the diocesan review board not conduct its own investigation of the charges before removing the priest from ministry, choosing instead to accept the validity of the allegation?
- What is the difference between a “false memory” and lying?
- Why are “false memories” treated as a variant of “repressed memories”?
- How did the media react to the accusation and the exoneration?

Regarding the latter question, we did a probe of how the media handled this issue. Here is what we found.

The print media and the online media coverage was mostly fair; they covered both the accusation and the exoneration. TV coverage in Fort Myers was also pretty good, though CBS, NBC and Fox ran slightly more stories on the accusation than on the exoneration. ABC actually ran one more story on the exoneration than the accusation. Now to the other issues.

It is outrageous that adults who make public accusations can remain anonymous while the accused can be smeared all over the place.

Why aren't review boards—not just in the Diocese of Venice—immediately summoned to meet, virtually or in person, when the accuser withdraws his claims? If there are many people on the panel, there should be an executive committee that can quickly step in so that accused priests in Fr. Kaywell's situation can return to ministry ASAP.

Why do review boards remove a priest from ministry, based on an allegation, without first assessing the veracity of the accusation? No other organization acts this way.

When an accuser later claims to have suffered a “false memory,” this should be the beginning of a new chapter in this case, and not treated as if everything has been resolved.

A close cousin to “false memory” is “repressed memory,” the condition whereby someone who says he was violated in the past only now claims to remember what happened.

What follows is taken from my book, [*The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes.*](#)

“Repressed memory” is a fiction. It doesn’t exist. Sociologist Richard Ofshe and journalist Ethan Watters studied this notion and concluded that it “has never been more than unsubstantiated speculation tied to Freudian concepts and speculative mechanisms.”

Dr. Paul McHugh, a professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, has long dismissed it as a dangerous idea that literally manufactures victims.

The American Psychological Association rendered its judgment and concluded that “repressed memory” is a “cultural creation having no basis in science.”

Clinical psychologists from the University of Nevada, Reno, led by William O’Donohue, studied the literature on this subject and concluded that “there is a large amount of scientific evidence that clearly shows that repressed memories simply do not exist.”

It cannot be said too strongly that the rights of priests in the United States cry out for reforms. The scale of justice is tipped against them. They should have the same guarantees and protections afforded every other American. That is not the case now, and it hasn’t been for decades.

Fr. Gordon MacRae was sent to prison in Manchester, New Hampshire in 1994 for offenses that he allegedly committed between 1979 and 1983. The accuser, Thomas Grover, said he periodically repressed his memory of the assault. He had prior convictions for fraud, forgery, theft, assault, and drug charges.

When MacRae was offered a plea deal, he turned it down, insisting on his innocence, even knowing that he could spend the rest of his life behind bars. He was sentenced to 67 years in prison. Worse, more recent evidence shows that he was railroaded by the authorities.

It's time the bishops revisit the issue of due process for priests. It can begin by asking for the input of people like Msgr. Thomas Guarino, a Seton Hall professor who has written authoritatively on this subject.

Note: We are sending this article to diocesan officials across the country.

CAN'T ERASE OUR JUDEO-CHRISTIAN PAST

[Bill Donohue](#)

Militant secularists would like to erase our religious heritage, but they are clearly in over their heads. Our nation's Capitol abounds with Judeo-Christian iconography, so much so that it overwhelms attempts to cancel it.

- The dome of the U.S. Capitol was inspired by the dome of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, as well as St. Paul's Cathedral in London.
- The Supreme Court building is modeled after a Roman temple.
- St. Joseph's church on Capitol Hill was built in 1868.
- The Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress features *The Court of Neptune Fountain*; it resembles a grotto.

- The west end of the Mall—from the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial—has a statue of Lincoln surrounded by comments he made about his respect for God. At the far end of the Mall, the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress, and the Capitol building have inscriptions honoring our Judaic heritage.
- Within the Capitol there are statues of Catholic priests and nuns and medallions of Pope Innocent III and Pope Gregory IX.
- On the first floor of the Main Reading Room in the Library of Congress there is a statue of St. Paul.
- In the Library there is a quote from the Book of Proverbs and a reference to God from Shakespeare.
- There is a chapel in the U.S. Capitol. Moreover, prayer meetings for Senators and Congressmen are commonplace throughout.
- Crucifixes abound in the Capitol.
- On the front doors of the Capitol are pictures of Franciscans with rosaries, symbolizing the history of Columbus.
- In the Rotunda, there is a painting of Hernando De Soto and his armies standing on the banks of the river rejoicing, as well as a depiction of priests planting a cross.
- There is also a painting in the dome of the burial scene of De Soto depicting a Mass being celebrated; a barge is carrying his body for burial in the Mississippi. A priest is shown holding a crucifix during burial prayers.
- In front of the Federal District Court, across from the National Gallery of Art, there is a depiction of pilgrims praying before a cross—a splendid recognition of religious liberty.
- On the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 7th St. N.W. is the *Temperance Fountain* with the inscription of Temperance, Charity, Hope, and Faith. Nearby is a quote from St. Paul.

- Near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, engraved on the sidewalk, there is the *56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial* with an inscription referencing our “firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence.”
- There is a frieze on the Supreme Court Building that depicts Moses.
- The entrance doors to the Supreme Court, made of oak, have the Ten Commandments engraved on each lower portion of each door.
- Inside the Supreme Court, right above where the Justices sit, there is a display of Moses and the Ten Commandments.

These are just some of the tributes to our Judeo-Christian heritage found in Washington, D.C. Noticeably absent are tributes to the contributions made by secularists. Small wonder.

P.S. To read more about this issue, see One Nation Under God: Religious Symbols, Quotes, and Images in Our Nation's Capitol, by Fr. Eugene F. Hemrick.

PUBLIC CONCERNED ABOUT LOSS OF RELIGION

[Bill Donohue](#)

Is it a good thing, or a bad thing, for a free society to have a vibrant role for religion? The Founders, not all of whom were practicing Christians, were unanimous in their conviction: the public role of religion is indispensable to the crafting of a free society. The American people in 2024

seem to agree.

In a recent survey by Pew Research Center, 80 percent of Americans say that religion's role in American life is shrinking, and most conclude that it is not a good thing. This is significant given that this is the highest percentage ever recorded in a Pew survey on this issue. It was also found that 57 percent of Americans express a positive view of religion's influence in American life.

The survey did not ask why it is not a good thing for religion's role to recede, but it is likely that it has something to do with the fact that the inculcation of religious values has a stabilizing effect on individuals, and hence on society. Also, character building, which is essential to citizenship, is facilitated by religion. Unfortunately, American society has become more unstable and character building has become more difficult.

Another bad sign: the faithful are in a precarious state. Almost half, 48 percent, say there's "a great deal" of or "some" conflict between their religious beliefs and mainstream American culture (up from 42 percent in 2020). In fact, 3-in-10 (29 percent) now think of themselves as religious minorities. This is what we would expect from an increasingly secular society—religious Americans are in an uneasy spot.

The public looks to the president of the United States to defend the faithful. Indeed, 64 percent say it is important for the president to stand up for religious Americans. Interestingly, most don't believe that either Trump or Biden is very religious: the figures are 13 percent and 4 percent, respectively. This is striking given that Biden has gone out of his way to hawk his Catholic credentials.

While Americans are concerned about the declining effect of religion on society, they are wary about extremists, and not just religious extremists. They do not support those who are

too aggressive in pushing either a religious or a secular agenda. This is prudent: extremists are not a good role model.

Regarding this issue, it is interesting to note that secularists—atheists, agnostics and the religiously unaffiliated—are more likely to say that conservative Christians have gone too far with their agenda (72 percent) than Christians are to say that liberals who are not religious have gone too far with their agenda (63 percent). This helps to explain why the faithful believe there is a tension between their beliefs and the mainstream American culture. In short, it seems likely that they are feeling the pinch of militant secularists.

Secularists have made a lot of hay lately over the threat of so-called Christian nationalists. But if these people were really the threat that secularists say they are, the majority of Americans wouldn't say they have never heard or read about Christian nationalism. So much for this bogeyman. It would be more accurate to say that it is not those being charged as extremists who are the problem; it is those making the charge.

The survey also found that while most Americans don't want Christianity to be the official religion, a plurality (44 percent) of those who think this way nonetheless believe the federal government should promote Christian moral values. There is nothing inconsistent with this view. In fact, it is identical to the beliefs of the Founders: they did not want an established church, but they also maintained that the nation would benefit by advancing *Christian-inspired* values.

It would be instructive to learn what Americans consider secular values to be and why they are not supportive of them. The findings would no doubt prove to be enlightening, both for the faithful and for secularists.

FLAWED SURVEY DEMONIZES CHRISTIANS

[Bill Donohue](#)

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 to do 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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SALUTE TO ST. PATRICK

[Bill Donohue](#)

[Note: We run this article each year in honor of St. Patrick]

The heroics of St. Patrick are not appreciated as much as they should be. He is the first person in history to publicly condemn slavery, and one of the first leaders to champion the cause of equal rights.

There is much to celebrate on March 17. Fortunately, his writings, though slim, are eye-opening accounts of his life: *Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus* and *Confession* reveal much about the man. Along with other sources, they paint a picture of his saintliness.

Patrick was born in Britain in the 4th century to wealthy parents. It is likely that he was baptized, though growing up he did not share his family's faith. He was an atheist.

When he was 15, he committed what he said was a grave sin, never saying exactly what it was; it appears it was a sexual encounter with a young girl. No matter, it would haunt him throughout his life.

At age 15 or 16 (the accounts vary), Patrick was kidnapped and enslaved by Irish barbarians. They had come to plunder his family's estate, and took him away in chains to Ireland. While a slave, he converted to Christianity, praying incessantly at all hours of the day. After six years, he escaped, and made his way back home.

His family thought he was dead, and with good reason: no one taken by Irish raiders had managed to escape and return. St. Patrick biographer Philip Freeman describes how his family received him, stating "it was as if a ghost had returned from the dead."

After he returned home, he had a vision while sleeping. He felt called to return to Ireland. This seemed bizarre: this is where he was brutalized as a slave. But he knew what Jesus had commanded us to do, "Love thy enemy." He was convinced that God was calling him to become a missionary to Ireland. So he acted on it, despite the reservations of family and friends.

Patrick became a priest, practiced celibacy, and was eventually named a bishop. Contrary to what many believe, he did not introduce Christianity to Ireland, nor was he Ireland's first bishop. But he did more to bring the Gospel to Ireland than anyone, converting legions of pagans, especially in the northern parts of the island.

His missionary work in Ireland has been duly noted, but his strong defense of human rights has not been given its due.

No public person before him had denounced slavery, widespread though it was. Jesus was silent on the subject, Aristotle thought it was a natural way of life, and neither master nor slave saw anything fundamentally wrong with it. Patrick did.

Though he did not invoke natural law specifically, he was instinctively drawn to it. He taught that all men were created equal in the eyes of God, and that the inherent dignity of everyone must be respected.

Patrick did more than preach—he lashed out at the British dictator, Coroticus, harshly rebuking him for his mistreatment of the Irish. In fact, Patrick found his Irish converts to be more civilized than Coroticus and his band of thugs.

Patrick was way ahead of his time in the pursuit of human rights. Not only were men of every social status entitled to equal rights, so were women. In his *Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus*, he scolds "the tyrant Coroticus—a man who has no respect for God or his priests." More important, he made a startling plea: "They must also free Christian women and captives." His reasoning showed the power of his faith when he

said, "Remember, Christ died and was crucified for these people."

He did not mince words. "So, Coroticus, you and your wicked servants, where do you think you will end up? You have treated baptized Christian women like prizes to be handed out, all for the sake of the here and now—this brief, fleeting world."

What makes this all the more dramatic is the way the pagan world thought about women: the idea that women were equal to men was totally foreign to them. But the women understood what Patrick was saying, and gravitated to him in large numbers. The Christian tenet that all humans possess equal dignity had taken root.

Did the Irish save civilization, as Thomas Cahill maintains? Freeman thinks not—"it had never been lost." But everyone agrees that had it not been for St. Patrick, and the monasteries that followed, much of what we know about the ancient world would not exist.

Indeed, it is difficult to fathom how classical Greek and Roman literature would have survived had it not been for the Irish monks who attracted students from many parts of Europe. They are responsible for preserving the great works of antiquity. And all of them are indebted to St. Patrick.

It is believed that he died on March 17, sometime during the second half of the fifth century. That is his feast day, the source of many celebrations in his honor. His impact extends beyond the Irish and the Catholic Church—human rights are a global issue—making him a very special person in world history.

SUPPORT WANING FOR LGBT MOVEMENT

[Bill Donohue](#)

There are now more Americans who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender than at any time in history. A new Gallup poll shows that the LGBT population stands at 7.6 percent. But look for it to peak soon.

More than half of that population identifies as bisexual, a tribute, no doubt, to the encouragement they receive from those who tell young people that in order to find their true self, they need to “experiment.”

Then there are activists like Andrea Long Chu, a man who falsely claims to be a woman—he is featured in *New York Magazine*—who argues that transitioning to the opposite sex (a biological impossibility) is a fundamental human right, even for kids. He realizes, however, that he is having a hard time trying to convince liberals to get on board. Many have elected to sit this one out.

Chu is not wrong in his assessment: many liberals are reluctant to embrace transgenderism, and that is because they know in their heart of hearts that this sick ideology is a fraud. But God forbid they get tagged as a conservative, so it is best to sit this one out. How brave.

The good news is that support for transgenderism is waning. By a margin of 3-1, a new Rasmussen poll found that the public is opposed to giving minors puberty blockers and submitting them to sex-reassignment surgery. As for males who claim to be a female and want to compete in girl and women’s sports, the survey found that by a margin on 7-1, Americans are opposed to it.

More good news. In England, the National Health Service has ruled that doctors can no longer prescribe puberty blockers to children seeking to transition. The statement said that “there is not enough evidence of safety and clinical effectiveness.”

There will come a day when the public will look back at this period in Western history (the rest of the world has never bought into this mad idea) and declare it to be an era when child abuse was celebrated by the medical profession, as well as by elites in all walks of life.

This is the most critical civil rights issue of our day—protecting children from those activists, philanthropists, educators, journalists, social media influencers, therapists and doctors who prey on them for ideological or financial profit. The tide is turning against them, but it is not fast enough.

Had we followed the teachings of the Catholic Church on this subject—as well as on matters of sexuality in general—we would not have gone down this road in the first place. However, it is never too late to wake up.