

# The Psychology of Hating Thanksgiving

*Bill Donohue highly recommends this article by Stetson University Professor Christopher J. Ferguson, Ph.D. To read more by him, check out his [Substack](#).*

It's the season for Thanksgiving and we can look forward to some members of our glitterati giving thanks by dumping on the holiday itself. We are told that the holiday [celebrates genocide](#) and [news articles](#) repeat the [myth](#) that the first Thanksgiving celebrated a massacre of Native Americans. Most Americans ignore these dreary takes on Thanksgiving, but it's important to understand from where they originate. Particularly as these newer, bleak takes on Thanksgiving both distort history and contribute to societal discord without helping Native Americans.

Promoted by magazine editor Sarah Hale, the modern [Thanksgiving holiday](#) was created by President Lincoln in 1863. The intent was for a day of reconciliation and togetherness during the Civil War. But the day also became associated with a 1621 feast between British Pilgrims and the Wampanoag tribe celebrating their new alliance against other Native American tribes. Though postmodern takes on Thanksgiving emphasize how European colonists would come to violently dominate the Native Americans, this peace treaty would actually [last 50 years](#)—rather impressive for any two disparate cultural groups in close contact for any point and place in human history.

As such, Thanksgiving represents our opportunity to recognize the good in our own lives and in the world. Even the focus on the Wampanoag and Pilgrims acknowledges an ideal, despite a long history of human awfulness, we can sometimes see past it to our common humanity. Why do some, particularly on the

political far left, reject such a vision?

In short, our minds struggle with complexity, and offered a social situation in which criticizing traditional social customs is rewarded, some people will take it. In my latest book, [Catastrophe: The Psychology of How Good People Make Bad Situations Worse](#), I discuss how [emotion](#) and cognitive errors lead us to believe things that aren't true and make bad decisions based on such false beliefs. Several apply to the case of Thanksgiving.

First, we tend to divide people into ingroups (good) and outgroups (bad). Indeed, this seems impossible to escape, even as our society becomes unprecedentedly [less racist and sexist](#), we simply turn to political polarization. Historically, narratives of colonization tended to focus on Manifest Destiny, with Native Americans either invisible or savage bad guys. More recently we've inverted this creating a [Noble Savage mythology](#) in which Native Americans were pure, innocent, egalitarian, peaceful, and more, even though [little evidence](#) supports much of this.

By contrast, modern narratives paint Europeans as racist, genocide perpetrators, the bad guys in our own story. In reality, neither Europeans nor Native Americans were inherently good or bad. Europeans simply enacted historical patterns of violent migration common to all human (and [primate](#)) groups throughout history, including Native Americans. Had Native Americans invented gunpowder and transatlantic boats first, the process would have been reversed. Research indicates we tend to equate [victimhood](#) with superior [morality](#). Instead, we should recognize all human groups are capable of evil, and there's no moral contest to win. By understanding this we can focus on how to improve the behavior of cultural groups.

Misunderstanding is aided along by [confirmation bias](#), a process in which we give credence to evidence that supports

our prior beliefs and ignore or disparage that which conflicts with our beliefs. Thus, progressives tend to obsess over the bad behavior of colonists (which certainly existed), while ignoring that of Native Americans. By contrast, Native American virtues are celebrated whereas European virtues are waved off.

Of course, these beliefs are maintained in a social atmosphere where anti-American and anti-European attitudes are celebrated as a mark of intellectual achievement on the far left. Dissent from such narrow and prejudiced views is punished via ostracism, ridicule, and [shame](#).

That the Wampanoag and Pilgrims managed to maintain a peace treaty for generations is a remarkable historical achievement. Yet 50 years of peace is collapsed in progressive narratives about Thanksgiving and genocide. Of course, we should remain cognizant of the larger context, but Thanksgiving does not stand athwart this.

If progressives wished the general U.S. population to reduce their sympathy toward Native Americans, I couldn't think of a better way than to shame Americans for celebrating a beloved holiday. Hammering wedges between groups increases ethnic discord. Instead, finding commonalities and shared interests as the Wampanoag and Pilgrims once did is the best way forward. Celebrating the ideals highlighted by Thanksgiving and the positive power of both Native American and non-Native American cultures can foster intergroup [cooperation](#).

Let us all come together, Native American and non-Native American and raise a toast to our shared potential. However, we have failed to achieve it in the past, the future still offers us promise. Just as the holiday offered reconciliation between North and South in 1863, perhaps it can bridge divides between Native and non-Native Americans today.

---

# GERMAN BISHOPS SAY SEX IS NOT BINARY

[Bill Donohue](#)

The German Bishops' conference has issued a document to be implemented in Catholic schools that rejects the Church's teachings on sexuality. Gone is the teaching that there are but two sexes, male and female. The bishops, with three exceptions, teach that there is a "[diversity of sexual identities](#)." Not only that, they falsely claim it is a "fact," rooted in science.

Should teachers address a boy named Sam, who now claims he is a girl named Sue, as Sam or Sue? The bishops say teachers should use language that reflects "the diversity of sexual identities," allowing students to make their own judgments. So the right answer is "Sue."

This division in the Catholic Church is taking place at a time when Pope Leo XIV is embarking on his first international trip, the purpose of which is a call for unity in the Christian world. He has his hands full.

Leo has already affirmed Church teachings on sexuality, saying the family is founded on the "stable union between a man and a woman." When he was the bishop of Peru he spoke against the idea that there is a "diversity of sexual identities," which is what gender ideology holds to be true.

"The idea of promoting gender ideology is confusing because it seeks to create genders that don't exist. God created man and woman, and the attempts to confuse ideas about nature will only harm families and people."

This is consistent with what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches. “God created man in his own image...male and female he created them.”

Leo’s predecessor, Pope Francis, was even more blunt. He once referred to gender ideology as “demonic.” In his 2016 exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, he wrote, “We cannot separate the masculine and the feminine from God’s work of creation,” saying the “biological elements” are “impossible to ignore.”

In 2019, the Vatican’s Congregation for Catholic Education issued an authoritative document, “Male and Female: He Created Them.” It said that gender ideology “denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences, thereby eliminating the anthropological basis of the family.”

In 2024, the Vatican Declaration on Human Dignity, *Dignitas Infinita*, underscored Church teachings on this subject. It said gender ideology “is extremely dangerous since it cancels differences in its claim to make everyone equal.” Similarly, this ideology “intends to deny the greatest possible difference that exists between living beings: sexual difference.”

It is not the job of the Catholic League to tell the Catholic hierarchy what they should do. But it is our job to keep Catholics up-to-date on what is going on in the Catholic Church, and this is especially true at a time when the Holy Father is calling for unity.

---

# NEW PROBE OF WOULD-BE TRUMP ASSASSIN NEEDED

*The Catholic League is urging two outspoken congressional critics of the FBI probe of Thomas Crooks to call for a new investigation into the attempt to assassinate President Trump.*

*Bill Donohue explains why. To read his letter, click [here](#).*

Contact Rep. Fallon: [pat.fallon@mail.house.gov](mailto:pat.fallon@mail.house.gov)

Contact Rep. Kelly: [mike.kelly@mail.house.gov](mailto:mike.kelly@mail.house.gov)

---

# LONE DISSENTER IN “EPSTEIN FILES” VOTE WAS RIGHT

[Bill Donohue](#)

The House vote to release the “Epstein Files” was 427-1; it passed by unanimous consent in the Senate. The lone dissenter was Rep. Clay Higgins from Louisiana. Unlike so many of his colleagues, he is not a lawyer. Indeed, he is a college dropout. No matter, his reasoning was both erudite and principled, something that cannot be said about his cohorts. Here is how he put it.

“I have been a principled ‘NO’ on this bill from the beginning. What was wrong with the bill three months ago is still wrong today. It abandons 250 years of criminal justice procedure in America. As written, this bill reveals and injures thousands of innocent people—witnesses, people who provided alibis, family members, etc. If enacted in its

current form, this type of broad reveal of criminal investigative files, *released to a rabid media*, will absolutely result in innocent people being hurt.” (My italics.)

Make no mistake, what Epstein did was horrific—he was a serial sex abuser who exploited young people. He also carried favor with the ruling class, which makes this entire store so sick. But the objections raised by Rep. Higgins are valid nonetheless.

The *Wall Street Journal* was correct to note that although these files cannot be used to charge anyone with a crime, they “now can be employed to smear reputations and embarrass opponents.”

In a Newsmax interview, Judge Andy Napolitano also understood what the release of these documents entails.

“Well, normally files like this where people have been investigated, and not prosecuted, are not revealed. That’s the reason for grand jury secrecy. So if the government brings allegations about a person before a grand jury and they decide not to indict the person, theoretically that entire proceeding—the government’s presentation of the grand jury’s vote—will remain secret forever. And the person who’s not charged will not have damage to his reputation. So Congressman Higgins, even though he is the only person of 535 members of Congress who opposed this, may very well have a point.”

We are sensitive to this issue because of what happened to priests in Pennsylvania.

Josh Shapiro, the current Pennsylvania governor, was the state attorney general in 2018 when he released a grand-jury report on six of the eight Catholic dioceses in the state. In doing so, he violated a legal tenet and smeared priests who were innocent: none of the accused priests had a chance to defend themselves.

The Catholic League, led by Jones Day lawyers, sued on behalf of eleven priests; they claimed that making their names public violated their reputational rights as guaranteed by the state constitution. We won in the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, 6-1.

Rep. Higgins was right to say that the “Epstein Files” vote was driven by a “rabid media.” That is a poor excuse for violating the rights of those who are not guilty.

Contact Rep. Higgins' chief of staff:  
[andrew.david@mail.house.gov](mailto:andrew.david@mail.house.gov)

---

# THE TRUTH ABOUT TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

[Bill Donohue](#)

Today is Transgender Day of Remembrance. According to GLAAD, the gay rights organization, “The Transgender Day of Remembrance is an annual commemoration of those whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence.” What they don't say is that [most of the violence](#) against these people is being committed by other trans people. They would have the public believe that they are being killed by hate-filled heterosexuals.

Transgender Day of Remembrance honors the memory of Rita Hester, a man who falsely claimed to be a woman; he was killed in 1998. Others who are memorialized antedated the Hester murder. They are Chanelle Pickett, Debbie Forte and Monique Thomas; they were also men who falsely claimed to be a woman.

The more we know about these murders, all of which occurred in

Massachusetts, the less convincing the narrative is that heterosexuals are a threat to the trans community.

After all these years, Hester's case remains unresolved, but there are clear indications that he was done in by his own. His real name was William Hester; he changed his name when he "transitioned." The 6-foot, 2-inch man liked to hang out in trans bars in Boston, dressed as a woman. After he left the Silhouette Lounge one evening, he went home to his apartment. Neighbors heard a lot of banging sounds and a loud yell. He was stabbed 20 times.

The police said there were no signs of forced entry, and that "the killer might have known the victim." This suggests he was murdered by another trans person (they tend to associate with those of the same identity), though everyone is reluctant to draw the obvious conclusion.

Chanelle Pickett's real name was Roman Pickett. Dubbed a "transsexual" by the *Boston Globe*, he was strangled to death five hours after he met William C. Palmer Jr. in a Combat Zone bar, located in the red-light district, in 1995. They hooked up at the Playland Café, one of Boston's well-known "transsexual pick-up bars." They smoked crack cocaine before heading to Palmer's bedroom, where they had sex.

A jury found Palmer guilty of assault and battery, but not murder. He told the court he did not know Pickett was trans. But this account was shot down by several others, including Pickett's brother, who also falsely claimed to be a woman. They said he was a frequent customer at the trans bar. Moreover, six trans people came forward admitting they had sex with him, and two of them testified against him.

Debbie Forte's real name was John J. Forte Jr. He was dressed as a woman the night he was murdered by Michael Thompson in 1995. The killer said they were "messing around" and after he discovered Forte had a penis, he killed him. There is no

evidence to the contrary.

Monique Thomas' real name was Rufus Thomas. He was killed by George Stallings two months before Hester was murdered by asphyxiation. His body was found next to his bed. That does not appear to be a coincidence. We know that after he was sexually abused by a family member growing up, he became confused about his sexuality.

In other words, in three of the four most heralded cases where a trans person was killed—they are the basis of Transgender Day of Remembrance—the killer was apparently a trans person himself. And since we know that *most of the violence* against trans people today is an inside job, the day of remembrance should focus on the violence within their own community.

No matter, the temptation to deflect, to blame others, is too much to resist. The LGBTQ crowd likes to cite the 2022 U.S. Trans Survey as proof that they are victims of harassment. The evidence, however, is weak.

The "Health & Wellbeing" section of the survey says that some of the respondents (the percentages vary) claim to have been victims of harassment. But how do we know the claims are true? After all, the claims were not subjected to independent verification—the "findings" are all self-reports. For example, the document says that 50 percent of those who considered suicide were "verbally harassed."

What constitutes "verbal harassment" is not said. Were they called names? They may have, but it would be useful to know how many non-trans people experienced name-calling over the same period of time—for all kinds of reasons (e.g., you are "too fat," "too ugly," "too nerdy").

At bottom, no decent person wants to dishonor anyone who has been truly abused, verbally or otherwise. But when there is a calculated effort to deceive the public about the true nature of the abuse, we are dealing more with politics than honest

reporting.

---

# HOMEOWNERS ASSOC. RESIDENTS HAVE RIGHTS

[Bill Donohue](#)

*We often get complaints from members who live in apartment complexes or condominiums that homeowners association managers are too restrictive in dealing with religious symbols at Christmas. We decided to do something about it.*

*We have spent weeks putting together an email list of over 2,000 Homeowners Association managers. We are contacting them today. Here is the text of the letter.*

Now that the holiday season is upon us, it is important that the religious rights of owners be observed. The Federal Housing Act (FHA) of 1968 prohibits discrimination by housing providers on the basis of seven characteristics, one of which is religion. Before 1968, HOA managers had a lot of leeway in enforcing policies that restricted religious practices, but that changed when the FHA was passed.

As interpreted by the U.S. Department of Justice, the FHA permits religious decorations on doors and in common areas. This would include a Jewish mezuzah and a cross. "Similarly, when condominiums or apartments have a common room that can be reserved by residents for private activities like parties or book studies, residents seeking to hold a Bible study or other private religious activity may not be discriminated against."

It should be noted that the Eleventh Circuit has stated, "the

Supreme Court has repeatedly instructed us to give the Fair Housing Act a 'broad and inclusive' interpretation.'" In other words, the religious rights of residents are presumptively protected.

What the courts take seriously is any selective enforcement of HOA rules. For example, to allow a menorah but not a nativity scene, or vice versa, is a clear violation of the FHA. Furthermore, the Supreme Court has ruled that a menorah is a religious symbol (even if it is not solely religious in nature). The crèche is also religious, but a Christmas tree is not—it is a secular symbol. This needs to be said because every year there are instances where these kinds of violations occur.

HOA managers have greater latitude in adopting restrictive rules for balconies. Balconies can be kept clear from displaying religious symbols; they are not analogous to doors or common areas. However, even if the rule is "facially neutral," there can be a violation of the law if there is evidence of an underlying intent to discriminate.

In conclusion, there should be no attempt to favor one religion over the other, nor should there be any intent to discriminate.

Wishing everyone a happy holiday season.

William Donohue, Ph.D.

President

Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights

450 7<sup>th</sup> Ave.

NY, NY 10123

---

# TRANNIES FREAKING OVER NEW PASSPORT POLICY

[Bill Donohue](#)

Trannies, a.k.a. trans men and women, are freaking over the new passport policy. Gone are the days when self-identification was dispositive: new passports recognize only two sexes—male and female. Seems pretty basic to most Americans, but to a tiny group of sexually confused men and women, the sky is about to fall.

Under the pro-LGBT Biden administration, trannies could choose to reject their biologically determined sex and instead identify as “X” on their passport, but that option no longer exists. Still, there are those who adamantly reject what science dictates, pretending there is an infinite variety of sex identifications.

For example, it is popular in some circles to speak of 2SLGBTQIA+ people. This stands for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual. The + covers all those who still feel left out. Then there are TGNCNBI human beings. This acronym refers to Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, and/or Intersex. The decision not to offer the + option can be seen as offensive to those who insist on inclusivity.

Why are the trannies unhappy about the passport change? They say it discriminates against them. But as the Trump lawyers told the U.S. Supreme Court, which sustained their position, “A policy does not discriminate based on sex if it applies equally to each sex without treating any member of one sex worse than a similarly situated member of the other. And here, the challenged policy applies equally, regardless of sex—defining sex for everyone in terms of biology rather than

self-identification.”

Trannies see this as government intrusion. Imara Jones, a transgender journalist, opines, “What this says is that you, as a transgender person, do not matter to the state, and the state gets to tell you who you are.” This is twice wrong.

Such persons matter a great deal to the state, which is why the State Department issued the new policy—to fix the unscientific policy of the previous administration. It is also incorrect to say, “the state gets to tell you who you are.” No, biology tells you who you are—your sex is determined by your father, not the state (which simply records it) and not the individual (who cannot change it). Facts, like nature, are stubborn, and factual statements about nature are particularly stubborn.

It is commonplace in the pro-trans camp to claim victim status. Lambda Legal, the LGBT law firm, says, “It’s understandable to feel scared, angry, or overwhelmed in response to the Gender Order and related federal actions.” But why? What is scary about having a passport that correctly identifies your sex?

The ACLU claims the new policy is “heartbreaking,” and risky to boot. “Forcing transgender people to carry passports that out them against their will increases the risk that they will face harassment and violence and adds to the considerable barriers they already face in securing freedom, safety, and acceptance.”

No proof is offered for this remarkable statement, but what is most interesting about this comment, made by Jon Davidson, senior counsel for the ACLU’s LGBTQ & HIV Project, is his Freudian slip about trannies.

By arguing that the policy “out[s] them against their will” is to concede that their real sex identity is being exposed! After all, isn’t that what’s being *outed*? On another note, why

does the ACLU assign a particular disease, HIV, to LGBTQ people? Another Freudian slip?

The Human Rights Watch is also sounding the alarms over pending danger. The new policy, it contends, “conveys the dangerous idea that requiring transgender and intersex people to share their sex assigned at birth is harmless.” But if our sex were “assigned at birth,” then how would it be possible to have “gender reveal” parties? To be accurate, what is being revealed *in utero* is not the gender of the person (that is a sociological term referring to expected norms for males and females), it is the baby’s sex.

If merely carrying sex ID were such a threat to human safety, why is it that Lambda Legal says, it is “not aware of any confirmed incidents where individuals have faced problems leaving or reentering the United States using an unexpired passport issued prior to the 2025 policy changes”? That’s right—no one has been beaten up by a TSA agent for misidentifying his sex.

The Trump administration, unlike the Biden team, believes that science should govern biological issues, not politics. Too bad many of its critics are on the wrong side of history, as well as science.

---

## THE GERMAN CHRISTIAN CRACKUP

[Bill Donohue](#)

Pope Francis wanted the Catholic Church to be more welcoming to homosexuals and transgender people, and he allowed priests to bless same-sex couples. This was music to the ears of the German Catholic hierarchy, so much so that they began

inventing their own rules governing homosexuals.

Francis thought they went too far, but this is what happens when reformers get carried away—they encourage a revolutionary response. Now the German Catholic Church is in a state of flux. But compared to their Protestant friends, they appear sane.

Lena Müller sports pink hair. She is not in the circus. No, she is a Berlin Protestant minister. She recently presided over a “poly wedding.” To be specific, she “married” four men. In keeping with the spirit of diversity, two of the guys were Latvians, one was Thai and the other Spaniard.

The minister belongs to the Evangelical Church of Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lusatia; it goes by EKBO. She promotes a “queer-inclusive” approach, and said the four men now constitute “one family.” Would God approve? Of course. “We saw that there was a lot of love between them. What could God possibly have against there being four of them instead of two?”

Did the EKBO approve this “marriage”? Formally it did not but that is because church weddings cannot be sanctioned unless they are a legally registered marriage, and polygamy is still prohibited by German law.

The EKBO had to bow to the civil law but that doesn't mean they didn't like what the renegade minister did. Instead of rebuking her, they stood by her, saying they were “appalled”—not by what she did, but by her critics. They even threatened legal action against her most vocal adversaries.

These EKBO Protestants have been actively subverting Christianity for years. That is their goal—to destroy Christianity from the inside. To wit: they seek the “decolonization of hierarchical and Eurocentric prayer language.” This is short for hating Christianity and Western civilization.

Their agenda is purely political, having nothing to do with religion. They are committed to “dismantling hierarchical, essentialized, naturalized intersectional categories such as ‘gender,’ ‘sexuality,’ ‘race,’ ‘class,’ ‘physical ability,’ ‘religion,’ etc.” In other words, they are in rebellion against human nature and the very stuff that constitutes society.

It boasts on its website that its texts “do not use binary language.” Translated, this means that the fictional world they live in does not recognize men and women. That’s too restrictive. Indeed, they take umbrage at the very word “women,” arguing that doing so validates the notion that such a biological group exists.

A few years ago, an EKB0 bishop, Christian Stäblein, presented a declaration on “Guilt Towards Queer People.” He asked for forgiveness, but not for himself—that would undercut the hierarchical mantle upon which he can lecture the unwashed—but for the “interrogations” and “dismissals” that queers have allegedly endured at the hands of normal men and women.

This is the culture that the pink-haired minister was nurtured in, so it was hardly a big leap for her to “marry” four men. It wasn’t all that risky, and the fact that the EKB0 elites rushed to her defense proves it wasn’t.

What’s next? If all it takes is “love” to justify a marriage, then Sam and Sally, brother and sister, can tie the knot. Indeed, they can add their cousins to the mix, Saul and Susan, and have a happy foursome. This is what happens when our imagination governs our thought processes, substituting make-believe for reality. It’s also what happens when those who want to subvert Christianity are seen as heroes.

---

# MEGYN KELLY IS RIGHT ABOUT EPSTEIN

[Bill Donohue](#)

Megyn Kelly is being bashed for saying that Jeffrey Epstein was “not a pedophile.”

Her critics are plainly ignorant, and their gripe is not with her—it’s with the American Academy of Pediatrics. It defines puberty as beginning at age ten for whites and Hispanics and nine for African Americans. A pedophile is a person who has sex with a prepubescent male or female, meaning someone ten or younger.

In reference to Epstein, Kelly rightly noted that “we have yet to see anybody come forward and say I was under 10, I was under 14.” She was also correct to say, “There’s a difference between a 15-year-old and a 5-year-old.”

She was not justifying predators of any age, and indeed it is malicious to suggest she was. The context of her remarks was whether Epstein’s predatory behavior qualifies as pedophilia. Clearly it does not.

Why does this matter to the Catholic League?

For too long, the media and the chattering class have said that the Catholic Church clergy abuse scandal was due to “pedophile priests.” Wrong. The data clearly show that the vast majority of priestly victims were male (81 percent) and that 78 percent were postpubescent. Why is this important? Because it means the molesters were homosexuals. When males have sex with males who are postpubescent, that’s called homosexuality, not pedophilia.

But the media ignored the data, thus avoiding the role that

homosexual priests played. This allowed them to tag the offenders as “pedophiles.” The fact is only 3.8 percent of clergy sexual abuse victims were boys ten or younger.

[See my book, [\*The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes\*](#), for the citations.]

Epstein was a sexual monster. But the discussion is marred when false comments are made about his behavior. It is even worse when people like Megyn Kelly are falsely blamed for justifying it.

---

## **TWO STELLAR AUTHORS JOIN OUR ADVISORY BOARD**

We are proud to announce that Edward Pentin and Anne Hendershott have joined the Catholic League’s board of advisors.

Edward is one of the world’s most distinguished Catholic journalists, serving as the Rome correspondent for EWTN’s *National Catholic Register*. He is the author of countless articles and many books on Catholicism.

Anne is professor of sociology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville and Director of Veritas and Sociology. She is a courageous scholar who never shies away from controversy, and her books prove it.

We are delighted to have Edward Pentin and Anne Hendershott on the Catholic League team.