

# TWITTER CENSORS AGAIN; CEO CALLED OUT

*Twitter's latest censoring of inoffensive speech drew a sharp response from Bill Donohue:*

March 10, 2022

Mr. Parag Agrawal  
CEO, Twitter  
1355 Market St. Ste. 900  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Agrawal:

You and I are in a different line of work, but we share one thing in common: we both oppose hateful speech and conduct. In my case, I am mostly concerned about hateful speech directed at Catholics.

I am writing to you because I do not understand why those of us who publicly acknowledge the fact that there are only two sexes, one male and one female, is considered hateful speech by Twitter. This is simply a pedestrian observation, one that also happens to be grounded in science.

Yet Twitter recently suspended the personal account of a woman candidate for a senate seat in Missouri, Vicky Hartzler, because she tweeted, "Women's sports are for women, not men pretending to be women." She was referring to a male University of Pennsylvania swimmer who claims to be a woman and is allowed to compete in women's sports.

Twitter has sanctioned at least three other persons who have made similar comments.

"The Twitter Rules" defines "Hateful conduct" as follows: "You may not promote violence against, threaten, or harass other

people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, caste, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, disability, or serious disease.”

That sounds reasonable. Could you please identify what Ms. Hartzler said that violated this policy? She obviously did not promote violence against, threaten, or harass anyone. So on what basis was her account suspended?

Telling the truth can be painful, but as Catholics we are called to do so.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.  
President

*When we went to press we had not heard from Mr. Agrawal, but we can assure you that he heard from our email subscribers, many of whom unloaded on him.*

*While a number of internet media outlets commented on this issue, we were the only national organization to directly confront Twitter. Many are understandably afraid to rattle the social media giant, but we chose not to succumb to intimidation. There is no virtue in remaining silent when those who hold to traditional moral values are being silenced by Big Tech.*

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## WOMEN’S RIGHTS?

On March 8, the White House released a “Fact Sheet” celebrating the first anniversary of the administration’s Gender Policy Council. What it chose to celebrate would not please many women.

There are 33 initiatives that the Biden administration has undertaken on this subject, and many have little to do with women, per se. Heralding an increase in the minimum wage is not exactly considered a woman's right.

More important, those executive orders or policies that speak exclusively to women are highly politicized: they speak only to a small subset of women. Worse, some are clearly anti-women.

Women who are married with children are almost completely ignored: only one of the 33 listings addresses them. Women who homeschool their children are totally ignored.

Among those initiatives that target women, there are 5 on abortion and 10 on the growing smorgasbord of LGBTQI+ people, not all of whom are women, and not all of whom even exist.

Some of these policies cannot seriously be considered as pro-women's rights; more accurately, they are anti-women.

Women's rights are not enhanced by denying them the right to compete exclusively against biological females in women's sports: they are retarded. Similarly, women's rights are negated when they are forced to give up their privacy rights when sharing shower facilities and locker rooms with naked men.

The Biden administration's idea of women's rights is as twisted as it is dishonest.

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# **CANCEL CULTURE IS CANCEROUS**

**William A. Donohue**

Technically speaking, censorship is something that only the government can do: it has the power to stop speech before it is uttered and prohibit the distribution of the written word. In a free society, such instances must be limited and well defined. For the most part, our society has done a pretty good job in ensuring freedom of speech.

Today we are faced with a cancel culture, a condition whereby some controversial ideas are being cancelled; in effect, they are being censored. But the censor is not government: it is the private sector. The social media corporations—Facebook, Google, Twitter—are the major culprits. These Silicon Valley behemoths are not interested in cancelling all controversial ideas, simply the ones they dislike.

The social media ruling class is not made up of liberals; they are Leftists. That's the difference between a moderate (liberal) and a radical (Leftist). As such, they don't believe in freedom of speech anymore than they believe in freedom of religion. To say they are a threat to our society is an understatement.

If it were the reverse—if speech that conservatives disliked was being cancelled by social media companies—it would be just as appalling. To be sure, the First Amendment provisions on speech and religion do not apply to the private sector; they are only limitations placed on the government. However, when the abuse of power exercised by private-sector titans is so overwhelming that legitimate views of a contrary nature cannot be expressed, then liberty is jeopardized. Facebook, Google and Twitter need to be broken up by government.

The origins of the cancel culture are traceable to the campus, not Silicon Valley. The professoriate has long favored freedom of speech for some, but not for others. In other words, free speech for the Left, but none for conservatives.

Remember "Crossfire," the CNN show that featured nightly

debates on current issues? It started with Tom Braden and Pat Buchanan, on the left and the right, respectively; Michael Kinsley and Robert Novak also hosted the show. Then there was "Hannity and Colmes" on Fox News. Neither exists anymore.

I mention this because I cut my teeth on these shows. When teaching at a college in Pittsburgh, I flew to D.C. on a regular basis to do "Crossfire," and when I came back home to New York in 1993 for this job, I continued to do the show. Three years later, Fox News was founded and I was a regular on many of the shows, including "Hannity and Colmes."

These types of shows did not die because of low ratings (a subsequent "Crossfire" was a flop, owing to attempts to tamp down the debates), but because liberals lost almost every round. If the Left was cleaning the clock of conservatives, the shows would still be on the air.

Before I left academia, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute arranged for me to debate scholars on a range of issues, in many colleges and universities. In some cases, students tried to shout me down. What was true then—it is even more true today—was the total absence of conservative students shouting down left-wing speakers. It never happens. It's always the Left that does the cancelling.

Sometimes the Left chooses to completely ignore challenges to its perspective. That is not as morally offensive, but it is very telling, nonetheless.

The first book I wrote, *The Politics of the American Civil Liberties Union*, was published in 1985 by Transaction Press, the largest and most prestigious social science publisher in the nation. It was founded by Irving Louis Horowitz, a Rutgers University sociologist who turned out to be a dear friend, he told me that the New York Times asked him to send a copy so they could review it. He declined.

At first I was beside myself—why would he do that? Irving said

that was because the paper had a lousy record of reviewing his books. Then the Times asked again, for a second time. He sent them the book, but they never reviewed it.

I later found out why. My book had been given to Ferdinand Lundberg, a liberal chronicler of the rich, and, surprisingly, he liked it. So the Times spiked the review.

Something similar is going on right now. My latest book, *The Truth About Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*, has been well received by many influential writers and commentators, including priests and bishops, but my usual critics on the Left, both in Catholic and secular circles, have ignored it. That's because it contains over 800 footnotes, taken from scholarly sources, and that doesn't give them much wiggle room to challenge me. They sure won't debate me, though they have been asked to do so.

As you can see from this issue of *Catalyst*, we have taken on Twitter again for cancelling speech it abhors (such as telling the truth about men and women). We will continue to do so. We may not be as big as Twitter, but our following is not small, either. There is too much at stake to lie low. We have no plans to do so.

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# CRIMINALIZING                      CONVERSION THERAPY

**Fr. D. Paul Sullins**

In America you can go to a therapist and get nonjudgmental help for psychological distress due to divorce, adultery, prostitution, promiscuity, polyamory, pornography, pedophilia,

and many other issues related to sexual choices and behavior. If you want to amend your behavior—for example, to stop promiscuity or viewing pornography—talking with a trained therapist can often help bring personal insight and strength to do so. Many clergy and pastoral counselors help persons who struggle to follow, or wrestle with guilt from not following, their faith's moral demands in these areas. Catholics may be familiar with networks of psychotherapists such as CatholicTherapists.com, who operate in full adherence to the magisterium of the Catholic Church, or Rachel's Vineyard, who are committed to serving women and men recover from the pain of abortion.

You can get such help for every problem, that is, except one: in a growing number of places in America, if a young person struggles with being sexually attracted to persons of the same sex, it is against the law for a therapist to help him or her try to reduce or avoid acting on those attractions. The therapist is required, by law, to affirm that same-sex attraction is unchangeable and anal sex is natural and healthy. Currently 28 states and several dozen cities or counties have in place bans on therapy that may take a different approach. Violators are subject to hefty fines, typically five figures per violation.

If you think that such censorship only applies to licensed therapists, and would not inhibit clergy from talking about their faith, think again. Proposed laws against “conversion therapy” would prohibit much more than therapy. Fr. Philip Bochanski, Executive Director of the Courage apostolate, recently explained to me in an email how such legislation could harm the Church's outreach to same-sex attracted Catholics:

*People who are troubled by their experience of same-sex attractions or gender identity discordance sometimes seek out therapy to understand this experience better and to achieve the integration of sexuality that is at the heart of the*

*Church's definition of chastity. But unless the counselor affirms that such experiences are natural, inborn and perfectly healthy, their discussions with their patients or clients are often considered "conversion therapy." ...*

*Proponents of [laws banning conversion therapy] have been increasingly successful in convincing the general public that whenever a parish priest, a college chaplain, or an apostolate like Courage talks to someone about the importance of living virtuously and choosing chaste friendship instead of same-sex intimate relationships, what they're really doing is practicing "conversion therapy." This is a serious mischaracterization, and gives people the mistaken impression that the Church and its ministers are intentionally harming people and trying to "pray away the gay."*

*The intended effect of such legislation seems clear: it will restrict the freedom, and often the willingness, of pastoral ministers and other people of faith and good will to speak, in public or one-on-one, about what the Word of God has to say on issues of sexual morality, attraction and identity.*

Pending or existing therapy bans in other parts of the world confirm the reality of the threat to religious freedom that Father Bochanski describes. Canada prohibited "non-affirmative" or "conversion" therapy nationwide last year, France last month, and England is considering a ban. The United Nations has made a global ban on conversion therapy a priority.

- In response to the proposed ban in Great Britain, last December thousands of pastors and church workers, including Catholic bishops, priests and deacons, wrote an open letter to Parliament stating: "We see in these proposals a clear possibility that our duty as ministers, of proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and calling people to find life in him, which includes living by his laws, will be criminalised." The signatories publicly pledged that they would continue to



teach and preach the Biblical view of sexuality and sex difference, even if it meant serving time in prison.

- In January 2022 a prominent member of the parliament of Finland was indicted on criminal charges for tweeting a photograph of a Bible verse (Romans 1:24-27) after her church, the Finnish Lutheran Church, sponsored a gay pride event. If convicted, the penalty for this 62-year-old medical doctor and mother of five, the former Interior Minister of Finland, will be two years in jail. She also faces additional jail time, as does her bishop, for charges related to the publication of a 2004 pamphlet titled "Male and Female He Created Them" (quoting Genesis 5:2), under laws that consider any suggestion that homosexuality is not healthy or normal to be a "crime against humanity."

To date therapy bans in the United States have been restricted by constitutional guarantees of religious freedom, but their advocates are working to change that. The Movement Advancement Project, an LGBT advocacy agency that ranks U.S. states on how pro-gay their policies are, rates the existence of a state law protecting freedom of religion or conscience as a negative for "equality for LGBT people." They warn that "42% of [the] LGBTQ population lives in states with statutory religious exemption laws," complaining that such laws "permit people, churches, non-profit organizations, and sometimes corporations to seek exemptions from state laws that burden their religious beliefs." Absent an effective response, we face a realistic prospect that laws will attempt to silence Catholic teaching and witness on human sexuality in the United States.

My research helps to respond to legal bans on so-called anti-homosexual "hate speech" or "conversion therapy," by challenging, on the basis of objective evidence, some of the falsehoods that underlie such legislation, in particular the belief that same-sex attraction is a fixed, immutable condition. Attempting to change one's sexual orientation, on this view, must inevitably fail, creating stress, self-hatred

and disappointment that puts same-sex attracted persons at higher risk of psychological harm, especially suicide. If homosexual people are born that way, and cannot change, they conclude, it is wrongful discrimination not to affirm their same-sex desires and behavior as natural and healthy.

The Achilles heel of this argument, and the reason perhaps that LGBT activists are so concerned with banning any discussion of the possibility of change in sexual orientation, is that there is abundant evidence that people can and do change their same-sex attractions and behavior. Two compilations of such stories have been published just in the past year, each with dozens of stories of persons happily leaving homosexual practices: *X Out Loud: Emerging Ex-LGBT Voices*, and *Changed: Once-gay stories*. (One can be forgiven for not knowing about them; both books have been deplatformed from Amazon and any mention of them is blocked by Twitter and Facebook.)

In addition to personal accounts, there is strong evidence from population and survey data that homosexual attraction and behavior can and does change. Population surveys that collect sex partner histories have long documented that the majority of persons who report having only homosexual sex partners before age 25 have, by age 40, reverted to having only heterosexual sex partners. Last Spring I (with Dr. Christopher Rosik and Paul Santero) published the results of a survey of 125 men who had undergone some form of “sexual orientation change efforts.” or SOCE, a blanket term for all forms of conversion therapy and related pastoral practices.

We found that over half of them (55%) achieved at least partial remission of unwanted same-sex sexuality. Over a quarter (26%) of the men who had engaged in same-sex acts now engaged exclusively in heterosexual sex, in most cases with a married partner, and 14% reported that their sexual attractions were now completely heterosexual.

Their psychological state generally improved following SOCE. Over a third (35%) experienced a strong reduction in depression and over a fifth (22%) reported reduced suicidality. This evidence directly contradicts the claim that homosexual attraction and behavior can never change and that attempting to do so will make persons more suicidal.

Opponents may argue that less successful SOCE alumni, who were not able to change their orientation, may experience more psychological harm. The stories celebrated in the secular media are all of this type, that is, of SOCE alumni who still identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual, and who report feeling harmed, typically more suicidal, by the experience.

To address this question, in January 2022 I published a study that compared a population sample of homosexual and bisexual persons who had undergone SOCE with those who hadn't, to see if the former were currently more likely to manifest greater psychological distress. None of the study participants had been successful in discontinuing same-sex attraction or behavior. Strikingly, I found that the two groups were statistically identical for seven measures of current harmful behavior, including self-inflicted harm (cutting), alcohol dependence, substance abuse, thoughts of suicide, planning suicide, declaring an intent to commit suicide, or attempting suicide. This result was notable because the SOCE participants were subject to worse childhood family conditions, higher minority stress and discrimination, and lower socioeconomic status, all of which are correlated with a higher risk of harmful behavior, yet following SOCE their level of harm was no higher than their peers who had not experienced these conditions. After accounting for these differences, the risk of suicide attempts was five times lower following SOCE than for those never undergoing SOCE—the opposite of what LGBT advocates allege.

These findings confirm Fr. Bochanski's insights quoted previously, who adds in conclusion:

*Ultimately, legislation like this, and the rhetoric that accompanies it, will make it less likely that people experiencing same-sex attractions or gender identity discordance will seek out the pastoral care that they need and deserve. ... [In this way] the legislation ... may end up hurting some of the very people whom they say they are trying to protect.*

Those who confess that the Word of creation became flesh in Christ believe that reason and faith converge on the same set of truths about God and humanity. I hope these empirical truths, which mirror those of the Catholic faith, will help to open minds to understand, and hearts to pull back from criminal censorship, with potentially brutal consequences, of opinions and religious convictions with which they disagree.

*Father Paul Sullins, Ph.D., taught sociology at The Catholic University of America and is a Senior Research Associate at the Ruth Institute.*

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## **BIDEN'S ORWELLIAN LANGUAGE ON SEXUALITY**

President Biden's State of the Union address was mostly about the Ukraine-Russia war, the economy, Covid, and energy. That's understandable given that these issues are paramount. Some, such as New York Times columnist Charles Blow, criticized Biden for not mentioning blacks even once. A more serious criticism was Biden's use of Orwellian language to describe matters sexual.

We all know that abortion means the killing of an unborn baby, but almost none of those in the pro-abortion camp likes to say

such things. Biden addressed this issue by saying, “Folks, advancing liberty and justice also requires protecting the rights of women.”

He did not mean the right of women to be free from sexual harassment in the workplace, or the right of women to exclusively compete with other women in women’s sports (which he rejects). He meant the right to abort their child.

“The constitutional right affirmed in *Roe v. Wade*, standing precedent for half a century, is under attack as never before.” He never said what that right was. Nor did he say why, when the issue of gay marriage was before the courts, he supported overturning two centuries of standing precedent.

“If you want to go forward not backwards, we must protect access to healthcare; preserve a woman’s right to choose—and continue to advance maternal healthcare for all Americans.”

In other words, aborting babies is healthcare. That in itself is Orwellian. He never tells us what the woman is choosing to do. To put it differently, what is the object of the verb “choose”? Why can’t he say what it is?

Saying things like “Maternal healthcare for all Americans” is total nonsense. Maternal healthcare cannot possibly be for men, so why not simply say, “maternal healthcare for women.” That’s because in his mind, sex is not an objective reality—there are men who believe they are a woman, so to speak about “maternal healthcare for women” would leave these sexually confused men out.

This teed up his remarks on “our LGBTQ+ Americans.” We know the L stands for lesbian, the G stands for gay, the B stands for bisexual, the T stands for “transgender” (there really are no such persons—there are only men and women), the Q stands for queer (a classic redundancy), but no one knows who the + people are. Someone needs to ask him about this at a press conference.

Biden said he wants to sign the Equality Act, the most radical, anti-nature, anti-religious liberty piece of legislation ever proposed. Among other things, it would do away with privacy rights—hurting women more than men—and it would force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions.

Anyone who thinks we are exaggerating should read what Kara Dansky has to say about the Equality Act. Dansky is a self-described “radical feminist,” and the author of *The Abolition of Sex: How the “Transgender” Agenda Harms Women and Girls*.

“What all this means is that if the Equality Act is enacted, any man will be able to gain access to any women’s restroom, changing room, or locker room in all public accommodations, which includes all restaurants, bars, movie theaters, sports arenas, and recreational areas. Grown men will be able to enter areas that are intended to be restricted to women and girls across the country.”

If Americans knew what the Equality Act entailed, they would be overwhelmingly opposed to it. Hence the need to speak about it in a deceitful manner.

Biden ended his comments on this subject by invoking God. Speaking about so-called transgender persons, he said “I’ll always have your back as your President so you can be yourself and reach your God-given potential.”

He is seriously wrong. Sexually confused boys and girls who want to “transition” to the opposite sex do so because they don’t want to be themselves—they want to be something they’re not.

Worse, to say that God’s creatures can reach their potential by rebelling against their God-given nature is to say that the necessary corrective to God’s design is genital-mutilating surgery. That is borderline blasphemous.

Biden’s deceptive language is deliberate. He does not want the

American people to ponder exactly what his sexual policies mean. His rejection of both nature and nature's God is all the more sick given his self-proclaimed "devout Catholic" status.

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## **TO WHOM DO CHILDREN BELONG?**

Does the child belong to parents or the state? This issue is nothing new—Plato argued that the community in which children are raised is the proper locus of authority, not the parents. He envisioned a society where parents were denied their right to raise their own children: they would be collectively raised. He explicitly said in *The Republic* that the good society was one where "no parent is to know his own child, nor any child his parent."

California Governor Gavin Newsom is no Plato, but he is also not a believer in parental rights. He objects to Florida and Texas officials who are seeking to stop the state from promoting "gender-transitioning procedures" for children behind the back of parents. "This is nothing short of a state-sponsored intimidation of LGBTQ children," he said.

In other words, if parents object to child abuse encouraged by state operatives—that is what puberty blockers and the prospect of genital mutilation are—then they are the problem, not the government.

In many parts of the country, children are being prompted by school officials to question their sexual orientation. Some children are then encouraged to transition to the opposite sex, without the consent of their parents. How many? No one knows for sure, but we do know that some public officials, school administrators, school board members and teachers' unions believe they know better than a child's parents what's

good for their kids. They are modern-day tyrants who respect no boundaries.

In a sane society they would be put away. Instead, they are awarded tenure.

In the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan supported an anti-Catholic law in Oregon that required all children to attend a public school (thus closing down Catholic schools). The Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary sued, and in 1925 the U.S. Supreme Court sided with them. "The child is not the mere creature of the state; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations (*italics in the original*)."

Today's Klan is non-violent and well-educated, but they are just as dangerous as the men in white robes. Newsom and the educational establishment are wrecking the lives of young people, promoting the pernicious idea that it is normal to rebel against one's own nature. It manifestly is not.

Young people are being exploited at a record rate—girls more than boys—by tolerating, if not actively promoting, the notion that switching one's sex is very much like switching one's diet. What's wrong with being a boy today and a girl tomorrow? Isn't that like being carnivorous today and a vegetarian tomorrow?

Modern society is made up of the individual, the intermediate associations that constitute social authority—the family, school, church, voluntary organizations—and the state. Beginning with the French Revolution, the road to totalitarianism has been greased when the state crushes the intermediate associations; when civil society collapses, only the individual and the state remain. As the 20th century proved in Russia, Germany and China, that means the end of liberty. The only bulwark to state power is the social



authority grounded in civil society.

Children are not mere creatures of the state. They are the natural outcome of a union between a man and a woman, ideally forged in the institution of marriage, and it is the prerogative of parents—not the state—to decide what is best for them.

Since Newsom was telling the governors in other states how to conduct their business, we encouraged people all over the nation to tell him how to conduct his business.

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## RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR STATES

We looked at the 12 most religious states and compared them to the 12 least religious states on several variables.

The difference between the two state groupings was negligible with regard to drug overdose rates and suicide rates.

However, 8 of 12 of the most religious states have a religious-liberty law, while only 1 of 12 of the least religious states do.

The average percentage of pregnancies aborted per 100,000 in the most religious states was 11.23 percent; it was 17.66 in the least religious states.

12 of 12 of the most religious states have restrictive abortion laws, but only 1 of 12 of the least religious states do.

11 of 12 of the most religious states has some sort of program that allows for private school choice, but only 3 of 12 of the least religious states do.

What does this tell us?

There is little that lawmakers can do to affect people from overdosing on drugs or killing themselves. Similarly, whether a state is religious or not does not seem to matter.

By contrast, lawmakers play a key role in affecting abortion rates. The more restrictive the laws are, the less the abortion rate.

When it comes to school-choice programs that include private schools, lawmakers tend to follow the culture: the most religious states are the ones that enjoy the widest array of school-choice programs.

While these conclusions do not settle the issue altogether, it does indicate that those who support traditional moral values are better off living in the most religious states.

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## **DISPARATE TREATMENT OF RIOTERS**

On February 15, 2022 Edward McAlanis was sentenced to six months probation, \$500 in restitution and 60 hours of community service. He was previously fired from his high salary job in financial services; he is now a pizza delivery driver. What did he do to merit these punishments? On January 6 last year, he joined a protest outside the U.S. Capitol, and entered the building without authorization. He posed for a picture in front of a statue of Abraham Lincoln. That was it.

By contrast, Antifa and Black Lives Matter (BLM) protesters killed innocent persons, set buildings on fire, assaulted the

police, looted department stores and participated in illegal street demonstrations. Practically nothing has been done to any of them. Moreover, the attacks these thugs made on Catholics have largely been ignored by the media.

Antifa sports a revolutionary ideology, one that is diametrically opposed to Catholicism; to say it hates Catholicism is an understatement. One of the leaders of BLM, Shaun King, stated in 2020 that all images depicting Jesus as a “white European” should be torn down because they are a form of “white supremacy.” He added that white people use Christianity as a “tool of oppression.”

During the many riots in 2020 and 2021, Antifa and BLM, or those directly inspired by them, heeded King’s statement by attacking Catholic institutions and iconic Catholic figures. Here is a sample of their work:

- May 28, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters broke into the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis and poured flammable liquid under the pews, lighting a fire that did significant damage.
- May 29, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters threw rocks shattering the rectory windows of the Cathedral of the Assumption in Louisville.
- May 29, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters damaged the exterior of St. Jude Chapel in Dallas and threw rocks shattering its windows.
- May 30, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters laced the exterior of Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon-St. Peter Cathedral in Los Angeles with the following graffiti: “prosecute killer cops,” “ACAB” [All Cops Are Bastards], “Kill all cops,” and “Make America pay for its crimes against Black lives.”
- May 30, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters spray-painted St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City with various counter-cultural slogans.
- May 31, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters threw rocks at the

Daughters of St. Paul Book Store in Chicago causing severe damages.

- June 1, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters caused serious damage to The Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Denver following several nights of rioting
- June 10, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters pulled down a statue of Columbus in Richmond, VA.
- June 10, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters pulled down a statue of Columbus in St. Paul, MN.
- June 10, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters tore down a statue of Ponce de Leon and spray-painted a statue of Columbus in Miami.
- June 19, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters tore down a statue of St. Serra in San Francisco.
- June 20, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters tore down a statue of St. Serra in Los Angeles.
- June 22, 2020—Keveon Gomera, who was inspired by Antifa and BLM, defaced gravestones of Dominican priests by painting swastikas and anti-Catholic language on them at Providence College.
- July 4, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters tore down and set fire to a statue of St. Serra in Sacramento.
- July 4, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters pulled down a statue of Columbus in Baltimore.
- July 6, 2020—An Antifa and BLM-inspired individual vandalized a crucifix outside of St. Bernadette Parish in Rockford, IL.
- July 11, 2020—Steven Anthony Shields, inspired by Antifa and BLM, drove a car into Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Ocala, FL while parishioners gathered inside for Mass. He proceeded to pour gasoline in the foyer and set the building on fire. When he was arrested, he told police that what he did was “awesome” and that he was on a “mission.”
- August 1, 2020—Antifa protestors burned copies of the Bible and American flags in Portland.
- August 25, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters spray-painted

anti-religious graffiti on St. James Church in Kenosha, WI.

- September 26, 2020—Antifa and BLM activists laced St. Peter's Chaldean Catholic Cathedral and Our Mother of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in El Cajon, CA with swastikas.
- October 12, 2020—Antifa and BLM activists spray-painted and toppled a statue of St. Serra at St. Raphael, San Rafael, CA.
- November 3, 2020—Antifa and BLM rioters shattered the windows of St. Andre Bessette in Portland.
- January 19, 2021—Antifa and BLM activists attempted to burn down the Rosary Cathedral in Toledo, OH.
- October 13, 2021—An Antifa and BLM-inspired activist spray-painted satanic and BLM messages on the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Denver.

The disparate treatment afforded those who participated in the non-violent January 6th riot, and those who participated in the violent Antifa and BLM riots, is a national disgrace. This has everything to do with politics, nothing to do with justice.

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## THE RADICAL NATURE OF LENT

Those who observe Lent are not known as cultural radicals, yet they clearly qualify as such.

Repenting for our sins is common practice for Catholics during Lent, though it is not understood—may even be the object of scorn—by secularists. Many of them do not believe in the existence of sin, never mind making reparations for it. Even more countercultural is the Lenten practice of self-denial.

In a society marked by self-absorption, nothing could be more extreme than self-denial. The idea that we should deny ourselves what we want rings hollow with narcissists, many of whom are secularists. They are the true children of Humanist Psychology.

Abraham Maslow posited that we all have needs, some of which are basic, such as food and water and feeling safe. At the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is self-actualization, the idea that we owe it to ourselves to be self-fulfilled.

Not surprisingly, his work was celebrated in the 1960s and 1970s, the two most culturally corrupt decades in American history. It was in the 1970s that Tom Wolfe coined the phrase the "Me Society," and Christopher Lasch wrote *The Culture of Narcissism*.

Carl Rogers, another humanist psychologist at this time, wrote that self-actualization means we are all arbiters of our own truth, and only by acting on our feelings can we be truly human. He argued that rebellion against traditional moral norms, as found in Christianity, was good for the individual and society.

Maslow and Rogers helped destroy people's lives. In fact, Rogers destroyed an entire order of nuns in Los Angeles, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The naive nuns followed his advice by questioning the norms and values they had committed themselves to, and wound up totally deracinated.

Maslow and Rogers got it all wrong. They never understood the Lenten precept that self-denial can be liberating. By giving of ourselves to Jesus, and to others, we experience real self-actualization, not the one steeped in self-absorption. Selflessness has its own rewards.

Selflessness also pays significant social dividends. Mother Teresa could not have comforted so many of the sick and dying had it not been for her selflessness. Had she been self-

absorbed, no one would have benefited from her care. There are many other persons who have also yielded great social dividends by sacrificing for others, though they're not publicly known.

Who were the men and women who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust? They were not secularists—they were people of faith.

Samuel P. Oliner, and his wife, Pearl M. Oliner, are the authors of *The Altruistic Personality*, a book about who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. These two non-believing Jewish sociologists interviewed nearly seven hundred persons, comprising rescuers, nonrescuers, and survivors in several countries in Nazi-occupied Europe.

They found there was a significant difference between rescuers and nonrescuers when it came to accepting "the importance of responsibility in maintaining their attachments to people." They learned that "More rescuers were willing to give more than what they might necessarily receive in return."

Catholics and Protestants who were imbued with their faith were the most likely to rescue Jews. Pearl Oliner explained why Catholics had the best record. They were "significantly marked by a Sharing disposition." In short, these Catholics embodied the "altruistic personality."

Who were the least likely to rescue Jews? The self-absorbed. The Oliners concluded that "self-preoccupation," or the tendency to focus on oneself, not others, was the principal reason why they failed to act. "In recalling the values learned from their parents, rescuers emphasized values relating to self significantly less frequently than nonrescuers." It was the "free spirits," the self-actualization types, who balked when it came to helping Jews.

Regrettably, our society is more self-absorbed now than ever before.

Lent is delightfully different. It signals an awareness that there is much more to this world than “me,” and that self-giving is a national treasure, not simply a personal attribute. We need more Lenten cultural radicals, not less of them.

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## BULLYING RELIGIOUS STUDENTS

The Oxygen channel recently featured an episode on the Freeman brothers, Bryan and David. In 1995, they committed matricide and fratricide.

Why did they kill their mother and father? News reports said it was because the boys became neo-Nazis. This is true, but it is incomplete.

Most news stories said the brothers were raised in a strict religious home, and that they rebelled against their parents, who were Jehovah’s Witnesses. After they rebelled, they took to drugs and alcohol, and it was in a rehabilitation center where they met Nazi skinheads.

As it turns out, these accounts are seriously misleading. The evidence shows that the boys did not rebel against their parents until after they were bullied by students *because they were religious and wore a suit and tie to school*.

Why does this matter? If school officials had been attentive to the bullying of the Freeman brothers, perhaps they would have intervened, and perhaps future events might have been different. We will never know. Had it been a gay or transgender person being bullied, they most certainly would have intervened.