

# THE ALARMING ASSAULT ON FREE SPEECH

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Survey data reveal that the most intolerant people in America are unquestionably young liberals. Why this is so needs to be probed, but first the data.

The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) studies free speech on college campuses, and its 2022-2023 “College Free Speech Rankings” is particularly insightful. In a survey of almost 45,000 college students from 201 schools, the University of Chicago was rated the top spot; Columbia University was rated the least respectful of free speech of any institution of higher education in the country.

Overall, the degree to which free speech is prized on campus was among its most alarming findings. Liberals, not conservatives, are the problem.

Opposition to allowing controversial conservative speakers on campus ranged from 59 percent to 73 percent, depending on the speaker.

However, opposition to controversial liberal speakers on campus ranged from 24 percent to 41 percent, depending on the speaker.

Is it acceptable to shout down a speaker? For liberals it is: 76 percent approve. For conservatives, the figure is 44 percent.

Is it acceptable to block entry to a campus speech? Almost half of liberals (47 percent) agree. Among conservatives, 25 percent agree.

Is it acceptable to use violence to stop a campus speech? A

quarter (25 percent) of liberals approve. For conservatives, the figure is 16 percent.

Not surprisingly, liberals are more comfortable expressing themselves on campus than conservatives are. As we might expect, 53 percent of college students describe themselves as “left of center”; only 20 percent identify as “right of center.”

When students were asked which subjects were the most difficult to have a conversation about on campus, they mentioned abortion, racial inequality, Covid mandates and transgender issues as the most difficult. With the exception of Covid restrictions, this reflects the Left’s obsession with sex and race.

A recent survey conducted for Newsweek found that 44 percent of those aged 25-34 want to make “misgendering” a person—using the “wrong” pronoun to describe a transgender person—a criminal offense. Among those aged 35-44, 38 percent support treating this as a crime. The overall figure for Americans is 19 percent.

Only in times of war has there traditionally been support for muzzling free speech. But we are not at war, so there is no need to balance free speech with national security. What we are witnessing today is unlike anything we’ve seen before.

There has been next to zero media outcry over this condition. Yet the assault on the First Amendment is palpable.

The reason for this situation should be obvious to those not drugged by ideology: it is young liberals, indoctrinated by teachers, especially professors, who are the most intolerant, and those who work in the media are so thoroughly politicized these days as to be unmoved by what is happening.

All this talk about “Christian nationalists” being a threat to free speech is a ruse. The real threat is coming from the

Left, the very same persons guilty of blaming their favorite bogeyman—Christians.