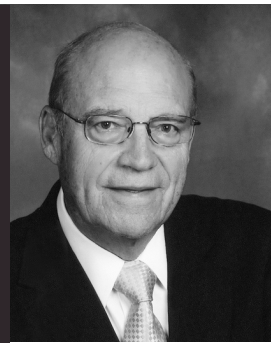




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report

64 Years Defending Our Christian Faith



Dr. David Noebel

American Style Bolshevik vs. Mensheviks by Andrea Widburg

August 2024

Wikipedia is such a hard-left organization that its founder disavowed it. Under the leadership of former Obama administration official Jonathan Greenblatt, the ADL, once established purely to fight antisemitism, is also a hard-left organization. However, October 7 scared it, and it began to remember its Jewish roots—so Wikipedia’s editors have banned it as a source for events in the Israel-Hamas war and its fallout at home. We are witnessing the American equivalent of the Bolshevik purge of the Mensheviks, which was the true prelude to the Russian Revolution.

I’ve written at length about the ADL’s leftism, which has seen it partnering with Al Sharpton, an unrepentant antisemite, and attacking Elon Musk. Additionally,

The ADL’s “Center on Extremism” is as preoccupied with LGBTQ+ issues and Biden’s open border as it is with antisemitism. Chaya Raichik (aka Libs of TikTok), an Orthodox Jew, is on the extremism hit list for exposing hospitals that give minors toxic hormones and mutilating surgery. However, if you search for Marc Lamont Hill, an openly antisemitic academic, or Jew-hating members of the Squad, they’re not on the extremist hit list (although the latter show up in the occasional policy press release). If you’re a Democrat, you get a pass.

As I write this, the ADL’s home page, rather than being dedicated to antisemitism, is celebrating Juneteenth.

The same home page also supports LGBTQ+ Pride month (of course).

One would think that the ADL has proved its leftist chops. However, since October 7, some of the solons at the ADL have realized that Hamas is not a nice organization and that it really wants to kill Jews. In the same way, watching events at home, the ADL has begun to understand that antisemitism is real and that it makes its home in America among the same intersectional groups that the ADL has been romancing for the last many years. Thus, the ADL has been daring enough to—gasp!—support Israel.

This was too much for the people at Wikipedia:

Wikipedia’s editors have voted to declare the Anti-Defamation League ‘generally unreliable’ on the Israel-Palestinian conflict, adding it to a list of banned and partially banned sources.

An overwhelming majority of editors involved in the debate about the ADL also voted to deem the organization unreliable on the topic of antisemitism, its core focus. A formal declaration on that count is expected next.

The decision about Israel-related citations, made last week, means that one of the most prominent and longstanding Jewish advocacy groups in the United States—and one historically seen as the leading US authority on antisemitism—is now grouped together with the *National Inquirer*, *Newsmax*, and Occupy Democrats as a source of propaganda or misinformation in the eyes of the online encyclopedia.

Moreover, in a near consensus, dozens of Wikipedia editors involved in the discussion said they believe the ADL should not be cited for factual information on antisemitism as well because it acts primarily as a pro-Israel organization and tends to label what they consider legitimate criticism of Israel as antisemitism.

You really must read the whole *Times of Israel* article to understand what just happened. The core problem is that the ADL looked at the pro-Hamas protests sweeping across America, the ones that demanded the death of Jews or that shouted, “From the River to the Sea” (a shorthand for exterminating the Jewish population between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean) and concluded that this was antisemitic stuff.

All I could think of when reading this was the internecine warfare in Russia between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks 120 years ago, both of which were vying for power to lead the Russian communist party. The Bolsheviks won and, flush with their victory, went on to take advantage of WWI and the general weakening of the corrupt Russian monarchy to impose 73 years of communist terror on the Russian people.

Whenever there are purges within communist organizations and battles between factions, it’s time for everyone else to start worrying. Democrat Jews, especially, had better worry because the ones who have allied themselves with the values of Hitler (a stone-cold socialist) and the Islamists are winning.

—*American Thinker*, June 20, 2024

Logos, Information, Knowledge

by George Gilder

Information comes first: it regulates the material world, not the other way around. The opening of Saint John's Gospel is actually the central dogma of computer science, economics, and true science itself: in the beginning was the Word.

When this thought first occurred to me in the 1990s, I was still an ambivalently secular intellectual. But after some fifty-five years of studying and writing about science and technology, I can now affirm the principle empirically. In virtually every technical field today—from quantum theory and molecular biology to computer science and economics—practitioners and theorists are more concerned with the word.

It passes by many names: logos, logic, bits, bytes, mathematics, software, knowledge, syntax, semantics, code, plan, program, sequence, design, algorithm, qubit, as well as the ubiquitous “information.” In every case, the information is independent of its physical embodiment or carrier. Biologists commonly blur the information into the slippery synecdoche on DNA, a material molecule, and imply that life is biochemistry rather than information processing. But the deoxyribonucleic acid that bears the word is not itself the word. Like a sheet of paper or a computer memory chip, DNA bears messages, but its chemistry is irrelevant to its content. Nucleotide “bases” form “words” without help from their bonds with the helical sugar-phosphate backbone that frames them. The genetic words are no more dictated by the chemistry of their frame than the words in Scrabble are determined by the chemistry of their wooden racks or by the force of gravity that holds them.

This reality expresses a key insight of Francis Crick, the Nobel laureate co-discoverer of the double-helix structure of DNA. Crick expounded and enshrined what he called the “central dogma” of molecular biology. This central dogma shows that influence can flow from the arrangement of the nucleotides on the DNA molecule to the arrangement of amino acids in proteins, but not from proteins to DNA.

When it turned out early in the twentieth century that the atom was not a “massy unbreakable particle,” as Isaac Newton had imagined, but a complex area of quantum information, classical physics began to break down. The counterpoint to the atom in physics is the cell in biology. It turns out that the biological cell is not a “simple lump of protoplasm” as long believed but a microcosmic processor of information and synthesizer of proteins at supercomputer speeds. In the wake of this

discovery, the established biology of Darwinian materialism is breaking down as well.

No evolutionary theory can succeed without confronting the cell and the word. In each of the some 15 trillion cells in every human body, the words of life churn through our nervous system at a speed that utterly dwarfs the data rates of all the world's supercomputers. Just to assemble some 500 amino acid units into each of the trillions of complex hemoglobin molecules that transfer oxygen from the lungs to bodily tissues takes a total of some 250 peta-operations per second. (Peta is ten to the fifteenth power.” Entailing mere nanowatts of energy, that's faster than the processing speed of supercomputers that require millions of watts.

Yet, confined as they are to informational functions, the cells' computer models perform only the initial steps of decoding the DNA and doing a digital-to-analog conversion of the information. The models do not begin to accomplish the other feats of the cell, beginning with the synthesis of protein molecules from a code, and then the exquisitely accurate folding of the proteins into the precise shape needed to fit them together into functional systems. Just modeling—in no way performing—this process of protein synthesis and “plectics” is justifiably proclaimed by Google's AlphaFold as the greatest breakthrough of artificial intelligence and machine learning.

—*Life After Capitalism*, p. 28-30

Wokism and the Military

by Elise Cooper

The War on Warriors: Behind the Betrayal of the Men Who Keep Us Free by Pete Hegseth discusses the betrayal of those serving. He uses his own experiences, plus others who served, to show what is happening today. Hegseth is a co-host of Fox & Friends Weekend, an Army veteran of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and was also a guard at Guantanamo Bay. He holds two Bronze Stars and a Combat Infantryman's Badge for his time in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The book talks about how the military brass are no different than the rest of our country emphasizing cultural chaos and weakness, how a woke socialist influence has removed essential core values. The book delves deeply into the political and cultural forces that have undermined the morale and effectiveness of US armed forces, revealing the shocking truth behind the betrayal of the men and women who risk their lives to protect American freedoms.

The book opens showing how the “Ivory Tower Generals” whom Hegseth refers to as “politicians in camo” believe only in their own careerism. In the chapter

“Cowboys Led by Cowards,” he emphasizes what should matter are principles, courageous leadership, and focusing on readiness, not race, sex, or outside activities. When asked about these woke generals, Pete stated, “There is a compromised General class that is obsessed with serving their political masters, preserving their career, and looking at their next career step. As a result, they have been willing to peddle, push, and promote dangerous ideologies. They must know in their heart of hearts these go against what should be a standards and merits-based organization where people should be held accountable. They have become a part of the system that pushes CRT, genderism, DEI, or environmental nonsense that I outline in the book.”

He is hoping that the next President of the US will fire those generals and “install leaders with real fidelity to the Constitution. The problem is these leaders got to where they are at because they are willing to do what their political ideologue handlers asked of them. Now, they are entrenched in their places, which means Trump, if elected, will have a hard job on his hands.”

One of those generals that seems to have no regard for the Constitution is Mark Milley. In the final days of Trump’s first term, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff admitted that he would give his Chinese counterpart, General Li Zuocheng of the People’s Liberation Army, a heads up if the US launched an attack against Beijing. Saying, “Hell, I’ll call you. But we’re not going to attack you.”

Hegseth feels Milley’s actions of making very public statements showed “what cards he will play, saying he saw as his job to stop Trump’s impulses, working through the system to resist him, instead of serving at the pleasure of the President. His job was not to undermine the Commander in Chief. If he did not support the Commander-in-Chief he should have quit, retired, or resigned. Not play defense on the inside.”

The book shows how wokeness within the military is hurting America. Those serving believe that diversity is not what makes the military strong, but “it’s the opposite: our unity is our strength”. Yet, Lloyd Austin, President Biden’s Secretary of Defense, had the DoD officials review and update the definition of extremism.

Although he feels the military is not perfect, Pete stated, “it is as good as it gets when it comes to racial recognition and that we are all in it together. Austin knew it, Milley knew it. Yet they pedaled the narrative that white extremism was a big problem in the ranks. This was because it was fashionable in 2020, after George Floyd and the push of systemic racism. When the military finally did a study on the subject it was found that it was overwhelmingly less racist than the general population. Everybody was treated the same. We all got the same uniform, the same bad haircut, and served under the same flag. This reinforces what we had

in common, not what was different. Unity of a military unit is far more important than diversity of its individual members.”

As an example, there is a discussion in the book about the George Floyd riots. “The most blatant racism I ever saw and heard in my life was during the George Floyd riots. Antifa and BLM rioters were screaming the vilest words against the black soldiers in our ranks. The courage of those black soldiers was amazing. We all thought of ourselves as family, with the attitude, “I got you. You got me.” Everyone held the line and were brothers/sisters regardless of skin color. As I talked about in the book, what is ironic is that I was there to protect the White House against domestic extremists and then I got called on by my own Army for a tattoo I had. It feels very upside down. This is why there is such a recruiting crisis. I only saw Army green, but did resign.”

A chapter was devoted on the rules of engagement, a “war on warriors.” Politicians, lawyers, and woke military leaders tied their hands. When asked, why this chapter, he referred to the phrase “endless wars.” “They never end because we are not allowed to fight it properly. We do not bring the enemy to their knees until they will give up. Just look at the pressure on Israel. They need to go into Gaza and kill every member of Hamas. Politicians have their schemes. I make the argument in the book that rules of engagement need to be loosened to kill the bad guys. This is what Trump did against ISIS. We fight an enemy that does not play by the rules. It is like playing a basketball game where I must dribble down the court every time, but the other guy can run down the court. Yes, we understand there are ways we need to conduct ourselves, but we should not knee cap our own guys if we ultimately must eradicate the enemy.”

He goes on to say, “Makes me wonder, in 2024, if you want to win how can anyone write universal rules about killing other people in open conflict? Especially against enemies who fight like savages, disregarding human life in every single instance. We are just fighting with one hand behind our back, and the enemy knows it.”

Mike Pompeo succinctly summed up what is happening: “How can we ask young men and women who have decided to risk their lives for America, even die for America, to affirm that our country is inherently racist? How can we ask them to view their brothers and sisters in arms through the narrow prisms of race or gender? The clear and obvious answer is that we cannot—not without putting their lives at risk on the battlefield. A woke military is a weak military. Unfortunately, woke and weak are exactly what our military is becoming under Biden’s leadership.”

What should readers get out of the book? Pete believes “what matters is how capable we are to achieve

our mission and get home. The brothers and sisters I served with will be that for life. They have been from all backgrounds. Now we are designating oppressor groups or taking gender standards. It doesn't matter what is their racial background or social-economic background. Readers should understand how important this institution is and how much I love it. Ignorance or willingly blind leaders go along to get along. They have sold down the river the most important institution we have. I wrote the book, not how the military went woke, but how it allowed itself to go woke."

This is a must-read to understand how hypocritical and misguided policies have weakened the military and left warriors feeling undervalued and unsupported. By exploring the impact of political correctness, social engineering, and misguided leadership within the armed forces, Hegsheth is asking Americans to stand up and support those serving, past and present, not to stand by idly and do nothing. Which means that voting on November 5th is something every patriotic American needs to do.

—*American Thinker*, June 21, 2024

America at the Edge

by E. Jeffrey Ludwig

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, looking at the disintegration of our society, finds considerable truth about the causes of this disintegration in the writings of Yuri Bezmenov (a KGB agent who defected from the Soviet Union in 1970). He described the subversion process as a complex model with four successive stages. These are: demoralization, destabilization, crisis, and normalization. She then goes beyond these foundation categories and says that they have been applied by American Marxists, the Communist Chinese Party, and Radical Islamists which three-pronged attack has led to our cultural disintegration. While this writer was intrigued and informed by Ms. Ali's commentary, a summary of our decline would, I think, be better if seen under the categories of power, greed, atheism, and family hatred.

Eugene Debs ran as a Socialist (same as anti-Semitic "Boynee" Sanders); yet if we read the Socialist Platform of 1912 it flat out says they wanted government ownership of the means of production—same as Karl Marx' and Frederick Engels' *Communist Manifesto* of 1848. Although the Socialists seemed to be rejected in the Presidential elections, by 1916 the American people had voted in the 16th Amendment providing for federal income tax to pay for a widely expanded federal government thus taking a giant step towards socialism/communism. That amendment signified free enterprise

was under attack. A dramatic expansion of government power and authority needed to be funded, and the income tax provided that funding.

These first communist incursions were rightly understood by Republicans in the 1920s as being related to the millions of immigrants from Europe from 1890 to 1920. Socialist and communist ideas were abounding in Europe during those years and many holding those views emigrated to the USA. So the Republicans restricted immigration to percentages of various nationalities from earlier periods.

Despite the attempt of immigration reform to save the country from leftist expansion, those restrictions were too little and too late to prevent the New Deal. In order to print more money—which they claimed was justified by the widespread poverty of the depression—the New Deal took us off the gold standard as backing for our currency, which decision opened the door to continuous inflation since 1933. These 90 years of inflation have been "fed" by the ever-increasing printing of currency by the federal government. Thus, the income tax, the printing of money not backed by gold, the setting of interest rates by the Fed, and the continuous promotion of the idea that the bigger the government, the more protected the people are (but actually the more in bondage the people are) became the four-part mantra of our ever-diminishing economic freedoms. The love of an elite for *power* took control over a fearful and widely uninformed population.

But here's an interesting point. The Federal Reserve was created under Pres. Woodrow Wilson to supposedly protect the economy from regular and destructive cycles of bank closures. But the irony was that even with the Federal Reserve, there was not enough money to save the banks which crashed in 1929. Despite the brilliant banking minds [sic] at the Federal Reserve prior to the crash of '29 ushering in the Great Depression, bankers were allowed by the Feds to invest personal savings of account holders in stocks, thus putting those savings at greater risk than if used for safer investments.

Interestingly, under FDR the banking laws were rewritten to provide greater protection to depositors, plus there was FDIC insurance. It took a Great Depression to wake up the Democrats to the inherently flawed and risky banking system, and the Glass-Steagall Act was passed which separated commercial banking from investment banking. However, in 1999, both Dems and Repubs took down the "wall of separation" between savings and investments, and the overturning was signed into law by Pres. Bill Clinton. This overturning in only nine years led to the financial debacle of 2008. This reversal was a greedy and vile step from which we still have not fully recovered. This writer was seated next to a vice-president of a major bank on a bus ride from New York City to Philadelphia who was utterly disgusted by the reversal of Glass-Steagall, sponsored by both parties.

Thus greed, which is condemned by the Ten Commandments (“Thou shall not covet”) infects both the Dems and the Repubs. Our skyrocketing debt shows how the greed has subverted good financial management first at the federal level and then metastasized to the state and local levels, putting many pressures on the citizens vis-a-vis taxation, chronic inflationary cycles, having both moms and dads work to meet basic expenses, sky-high interest rates for mortgages, etc. This is an outworking of the exponential growth of *greed*.

Then between 1948 and 1962 there were three or four Supreme Court decisions that eliminated all references to God in the public schools. The false and untenable doctrine of separation of church and state based on a misreading of a letter by Thomas Jefferson was affirmed by a 5-4 vote in 1947 after 171 years of functioning quite well without said “separation.” By the early 1960s, no reading of Psalms, no posting of the Ten Commandments, and no prayers were allowed as the doctrine of *atheism* took a big leap forward.

Lastly, the exaltation of the family as the fundamental institution of American life took a big hit with the passage of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. By removing abortion from being a local matter to being nationally valid and constitutional, the death of 60-million-plus babies took on a bogus veneer of legitimacy as all those precious souls were sacrificed on the altar of women’s health. For 2020, a total of 620,327 abortions were reported to CDC, and the abortion ratio was 198 abortions per 1,000 live births. That means that an incredibly high one out of six births were aborted. Only a small percent of the abortions were to protect the health of the moms. Those purposeful killings were and continue to be the greatest holocaust in human history. With this wholesale rejection of children, not only was our tax base and our military recruitment adversely affected, but the centrality of the family as the pillar of society was undermined. What sense does “honor your father and your mother” (the Fifth of the Ten Commandments) mean if mothers and fathers don’t even want the children who would honor them? Similarly, in the landmark *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision of 2015 legitimizing homosexual marriage (despite the Tenth Amendment which says that all matters of governance not addressed by the Constitution are left to the states, and 36 states including blue state California had already rejected homosexual marriage) was another giving of the middle finger to the Fifth Commandment. These two pieces of legislation expressed our turn as a country from family love to *family hatred*.

—*American Thinker*, June 11, 2024

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Due Process Violated

by David B. Rivkin Jr. and Elizabeth Price Foley

Whether you love, hate, or merely tolerate Donald Trump, you should care about due process, which is fundamental to the rule of law. New York’s trial of Mr. Trump violated basic due-process principles.

“No principle of procedural due process is more clearly established than that notice of the specific charge,” the Supreme Court states in *Cole v. Arkansas* (1948), “and a chance to be heard in a trial of the issues raised by that charge, if desired, [is] among the constitutional rights of every accused in a criminal proceeding in all courts, state or federal.” In *in re Winship* (1970), the justices affirmed that “the Due Process Clause protects the accused against conviction except upon proof beyond a reasonable doubt of every fact necessary to constitute the crime with which he is charged.” These three due-process precepts—notice, meaningful opportunity to defend, and proof of all elements—were absent in Mr. Trump’s trial.

The state offense with which Mr. Trump was indicted, “falsifying business records,” requires proof of an “intent to defraud.” To elevate this misdemeanor to a felony, the statute requires proof of “intent to commit another crime.” In *People v. Bloomfield* (2006), the state’s highest court observed that “intent to commit another crime” is an indispensable element of the felony offense.

New York courts have concluded that the accused need not be *convicted* of the other crime since an “intent to commit” it is sufficient to satisfy the statute. But because that intent is, in the words of *Winship*, “a fact necessary to constitute the crime,” it is an element of felony falsification. Due process requires that the defendant receive timely notice of the other crime he allegedly intended to commit. It also requires that he have opportunity to defend against that accusation and that prosecutors prove beyond a reasonable doubt his intent to commit it.

Mr. Trump’s indictment didn’t specify the other crime he allegedly intended to commit. Prosecutors didn’t do so during the trial either. Only after the evidentiary phase of the trial did Judge Juan Merchan reveal that the other crime was Section 17-152 of New York’s election law, which makes it a misdemeanor to engage in a conspiracy “to promote or prevent the election of any person to a public office by unlawful means.”

To recap, the prosecution involved (1) a misdemeanor elevated to a felony based on an “intent to commit another crime,” (2) an indictment and trial that failed to specify, or present evidence establishing, another crime the defendant intended to commit, and (3)

a jury instruction that the other crime was one that necessitated further proof of “unlawful means.” It’s a Russian-nesting-doll theory of criminality: The charged crime hinged on the intent to commit another, unspecified crime, which in turn hinged on the actual commission of *yet another* unspecified offense.

To make matters worse, Judge Merchan instructed the jury: “Although you must conclude unanimously that the defendant conspired to promote or prevent the election of any person to a public office by unlawful means, you need not be unanimous as to what those unlawful means were.”

Due process demands that felony, verdicts be unanimous, but in *Schad v. Arizona* (1991), a murder case, the high court indicated that there need not be unanimity regarding the means by which a crime is committed. But a plurality opinion by Justice David Souter cautioned that if the available means of committing a crime are so capacious that the accused is not “in a position to understand with some specificity the legal basis of the charge against him,” due process will be violated. “Nothing in our history suggests that the Due Process Clause would permit a State to convict anyone under a charge of ‘Crime’ so generic that any combination of jury findings of embezzlement, reckless driving, murder, burglary, tax evasion, or littering, for example, would suffice for conviction,” Justice Souter wrote.

Justice Antonin Scalia concurred, observing that “one can conceive of novel ‘umbrella’ crimes (a felony consisting of either robbery or failure to file a tax return) where permitting a 6-to-6 verdict would seem contrary to due process.” Four dissenting justices argued that the *In re Winship* precedent requires unanimity regarding all elements of a crime, including the means by which it’s committed.

All nine justices in *Schad*, then, believed unanimity is required to convict when the means by which a crime can be committed are so broad that the accused doesn’t receive fair notice of the basis of the charge. New York’s election law requires that the violation occur “by unlawful means,” so any “unlawful” act—including, in Scalia’s example, either robbery or failure to file a tax return—can qualify. That’s clearly overboard. Thus, Judge Merchan’s instruction that the jury “need not be unanimous as to what those unlawful means were” was unconstitutional.

That isn’t all. Judge Merchan hand-selected three laws—federal election law, falsification of “other” business records and “violation of tax laws”—as the “unlawful means” by which state election law was violated. Mr. Trump received no notice of any of these offenses, and the prosecutor briefly alluded only to federal election law, during the trial. Mr. Trump tried to call former Federal Election Commission Chairman

Brad Smith to explain why this law wasn’t violated, but Judge Merchan ruled Mr. Smith couldn’t testify on whether Mr. Trump’s conduct “does or does not constitute a violation” of federal election law, denying him a meaningful opportunity to be heard.

Judge Merchan’s second “unlawful” means, falsification of other business records, is circular: A misdemeanor becomes a felony if one falsifies business records by falsifying business records. Further, the prosecution never alleged or provided evidence that Mr. Trump falsified “other” business records. The prosecutors likewise neither alleged nor offered evidence that Mr. Trump had violated tax laws, Judge Merchan’s third predicate.

Mr. Trump, like all criminal defendants, was entitled to due process. The Constitution demands that higher courts throw out the verdict against him. That takes time, however, and is unlikely to occur before the election. That unfortunate reality will widen American’s political divide and fuel the suspicion that Mr. Trump’s prosecution wasn’t about enforcing the law but wounding a presidential candidate for the benefit of his opponent.

—*The Wall Street Journal*, June 5, 2024

The Raw Truth About Marijuana

by Allysia Finley

Young people who smoked marijuana in the 1960s were seen as part of the counterculture. Now the cannabis culture is mainstream. A 2022 survey sponsored by the National Institutes of Health found that 28.8% of Americans age 19 to 30 had used marijuana in the preceding 30 days—more than three times as many as smoked cigarettes. Among those 35 to 50, 17.3% had used weed in the previous month, versus 12.2% for cigarettes.

While marijuana use remains a federal crime, 24 states have legalized it and another 14 permit it for medical purposes. Last week media outlets reported that the Biden administration is moving to reclassify marijuana as a less dangerous Schedule III drug—on par with anabolic steroids and Tylenol with codeine—which would provide tax benefits and a financial boon to the pot industry.

Bertha Madras thinks this would be a colossal mistake. Ms. Madras, 81, is a psychobiology professor at Harvard Medical School and one of the foremost experts on marijuana. “It’s a political decision, not a

scientific one,” she says. “And it’s a tragic one.” In 2024, that is a countercultural view.

Ms. Madras has spent 60 years studying drugs, starting with LSD when she was a graduate student at Allan Memorial Institute of Psychiatry, an affiliate of Montreal’s McGill University, in the 1960s. “I was interested in psychoactive drugs because I thought they could not only give us some insight into how the brain works, but also on how the brain undergoes dysfunction and disease states,” she says.

In 2015 the World Health Organization asked her to do a detailed review of cannabis and its medical uses. The 41-page report documented scant evidence of marijuana’s medicinal benefits and reams of research on its harms, from cognitive impairment and psychosis to car accidents.

She continued to study marijuana, including at the addiction neurobiology lab she directs at Mass General Brigham McLean Hospital. In a phone interview this week, she walked me through the scientific literature on marijuana, which runs counter to much of what Americans hear in the media. For starters, she says, the “addiction potential of marijuana is as high or higher than some other drugs,” especially for young people. About 30% of those who use cannabis have some degree of a use disorder. By comparison, only 13.5% of drinkers are estimated to be dependent on alcohol. Sure, alcohol can also cause harm if consumed in excess. But Ms. Madras sees several other distinctions.

One or two drinks will cause only mild inebriation, while “most people who use marijuana are using it to become intoxicated and to get high.” Academic outcomes and college completion rates for young people are much worse for those who use marijuana than for those who drink, though there’s a caveat: “It’s still a chicken and egg whether or not these kids are more susceptible to the effects of marijuana or they’re using marijuana for self-medication or what have you.”

Marijuana and alcohol both interfere with driving, but with the former there are no medical “cut-off points” to determine whether it’s safe to get behind the wheel. As a result, prohibitions against driving under the influence are less likely to be enforced for people who are high. States where marijuana is legal have seen increases in car accidents.

One of the biggest differences between the two substances is how the body metabolizes them. A drink will clear your system within a couple of hours. “You may wake up after binge drinking in the morning with a headache, but the alcohol is gone.” By contrast, “marijuana just sits there and sits there and promotes brain adaptation.”

That’s worse than it sounds. “We always think of the brain as gray matter,” Ms. Madras says. “But the brain uses fat to insulate its electrical activity, so it has a massive amount of fat called white matter, which is fatty. And that’s where marijuana gets soaked up. ... My lab showed unequivocally that blood levels and brain levels don’t correspond at all—that brain levels are much higher than blood levels. They’re two to three times higher, and they persist once blood levels go way down.” Even if people quit using pot, “it can persist in their brain for a while.”

Thus marijuana does more lasting damage to the brain than alcohol, especially at the high potencies being consumed today. Levels of THC—the main psychoactive ingredient in pot—are four or more times as high as they were 30 years ago. That heightens the risks, which range from anxiety and depression to impaired memory and cannabis hyperemesis syndrome—cycles of severe vomiting cause by long-term use.

There’s mounting evidence that cannabis can cause schizophrenia. A large-scale study last year that examined health histories of some 6.9 million Danes between 1972 and 2021 estimated that up to 30% of young men’s schizophrenia diagnoses could have been prevented had they not become dependent on pot. Marijuana is worse in this regard than many drugs usually perceived as more dangerous. “Users of other potent recreational drugs develop chronic psychosis at much lower rates,” Ms. Madras says. When healthy volunteers in research experiments are given THC—as has been done in 15 studies—they develop transient symptoms of psychosis. “And if you treat them with an antipsychotic drug such as haloperidol, those symptoms will go away.”

—*The Wall Street Journal*, May 11-12, 2024, A11

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz (1913-2009) has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and is offered free of charge to anyone asking for it. The Crusade’s address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is 719-685-9043. Our website is www.ThunderontheRight.org. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (CACC is a 501C3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. You may also access earlier editions of *The Schwarz Report* and make donations at www.schwarzreport.org. Permission to reproduce materials from this *Report* is granted provided that the article and author are given along with our name and address.

The Methodist Church Goes Gay

by Carl R. Trueman

The United Methodist Church at its General Conference last week voted by large margins to lift its ban on practicing homosexual clergy and to eliminate from its “Social Principles” the statement that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. The decision is significant for what has long been one of the nation’s biggest religious groups, with more than five million members.

As with every other mainline Protestant denomination in America, there has been a long struggle over the church’s traditional teaching that homosexuality is wrong and that marriage is between a man and a woman. The UMC stood its ground for longer than many other denominations, even reaffirming its position and strengthening the penalties for breaking the rules in 2019. That, however, was also the years the UMC adopted a policy that allowed congregations to leave the denomination with their property. Traditionalists did so in droves, with more than 7,000 American churches departing in the past five years, preparing the way for the progressives’ triumph.

The recent changes weren’t surprising. Liberal Protestantism has always been a religious reflection of the broader culture. In the 1950s that meant supporting the Cold War, with John Foster Dulles being perhaps the most prominent liberal Protestant in public life. The 1960s, the Vietnam War, and the civil rights movement changed that. Liberal Protestants continued to do what they have always done, adding a pious blessing and an air of divine sanction to the cultural politics of the day, but the politics moved left. As the notion of civil rights fused with the sexual revolution, supporting abortion, homosexuality and then transgenderism became the imperative of divine love.

The feminist art critic Camille Paglia wrote incisively about this dynamic more than 30 years ago in an essay titled “The Joy of Presbyterian Sex.” She reviewed a 1991 Presbyterian Church USA committee report, which she described as calling for “radical change in traditional Christian attitudes toward sexual behavior and which specifically endorses extramarital relationships and homosexuality.” Ms. Paglia, a lesbian and atheist, might have been expected to welcome the proposal (which wasn’t adopted at the time). Instead, she lambasted the group for failing to stand by what the Bible and Christian tradition clearly teach on sex. She added that such Christians, far from being radical, merely operate within the conventional tastes of the dominant culture.

The committee would celebrate “hand-holding gays and lesbians...but not, of course, pederasts, prostitutes, strippers, pornographers, or sadomasochists,” Ms. Paglia wrote. “‘Incest is abhorrent and abhorred,’ it flatly declares,” the committee balking at sexuality outside its feminist frame of reference. “I wrote in the margin, ‘No lobbyists, I guess!’”

Ms. Paglia’s criticism of the Presbyterians in 1991 applies to the UMC decision today. True, the Methodist church adopted a statement about marriage. It affirms “marriage as a sacred, lifelong covenant that brings two people of faith (adult man and adult woman of consenting age or two adult persons of consenting age) into a union of one another and into deeper relationship with God and the religious community.” But what does “sacred” mean when divorced from the traditional theological and ethical beliefs that underpin Christianity? The description is nothing more than an aesthetic gloss to conceal what’s transpiring: the reduction of marriage to an emotional bond rather than the mysterious union of a man and woman that would normatively lead to the most sacred and godlike of events, the creation of new life.

For all the pious language, the UMC’s decision doesn’t represent a commitment to Christian orthodoxy. It is an affirmation of current middle-class sensibilities. The church shies away from the logic that would lead to the legitimation of any sexual act or arrangement as long as it concerns consenting adults. In short, it has chosen to embrace the liberal Protestant specialty: baptizing the dominant values it sees as informing the culture, no more, no less. In our times, when the values change with break net speed, the church that seems to accommodate the latest moral tastes will always be at least a day late and a dollar short. As any progressive teenager might say, gay marriage is so 2015.

There is an alternative. It is to heed Ms. Paglia’s challenge and hold to a historic form of Christian faith that doesn’t affirm the predilections of the surrounding culture. That will come at a cost, but then so does sanctifying the sexual revolution. The UMC this year ratified a budget about 40% lower than what it approved in 2016. The faithful have voted with their feet and pocketbooks. Don’t be surprised if the world to which the UMC has sold its soul fails to make its payments.

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