

Ben Shapiro, Lila Rose and the Rising Tide of Young Conservatives

If there's anything that opinion polls teach us, it's that the younger generation is much more liberal than the older generation, especially when it comes to LGBT issues. This younger generation, we are told, has grown up without many of the biases and bigotries of the older generation, and they are not as constrained by religious dogmas.

That's why they are more embracing of same-sex "marriage" and transgender identity, and that's why their children will be even more embracing than they are. Accordingly, the narrative goes, once the older generation dies out, resistance to LGBT activism will be virtually gone.

This certainly does sound like a reasonable argument, and it carries a certain air of inevitability. But is it inevitable? Are there any signs suggesting that things may not be so cut and dry?

On the one hand, the polls certainly confirm this narrative, and it could well be that our society has made an irreversible turn.

On the other hand, there are several factors that make me wonder if the future is as fixed as it appears.

First, many young people become more conservative as they get older. As the old (exaggerated) saying goes, if you're not a liberal when you're young, you don't have a heart. If you're not a conservative when you're old, you don't have a brain.

Second, the left in general, along with the LGBT activism in particular, has a habit of overplaying its hand, thereby

creating resistance to its agenda. How many James Damores are there in the Googles of this world, ready to push back against the diversity thought police? How many young people are becoming uncomfortable with the intolerance of the tolerant, finding “progressivism” to be quite repressive?

Third, liberalism really doesn’t work. What happens when the promises of socialism fail to deliver? What kind of backlash will that produce? What happens when the ever-evolving family structure starts to collapse? What will the failure of the radical left agenda leave in its wake?

Fourth, there is a rising tide of young conservative voices, implying that there is a growing number of young conservatives. Not everyone is drinking the Kool-Aid, and perhaps some on the left are being persuaded by the arguments on the right.

The *National Review* recently noted that Ben Shapiro’s podcast had moved up second place on iTunes, behind only Oprah Winfrey, which is quite an amazing accomplishment. And is there any ambiguity on where Shapiro, himself just 33 years old, stands on today’s moral and cultural issues?

Shapiro’s podcast is ahead of TED talks, ahead of Malcolm Gladwell’s *Revisionist History*, ahead of the Joe Rogan Experience. Not only so, but when Shapiro recently appeared on Rogan’s show, their YouTube video immediately went viral. And note that their conversation included a lengthy exposé of transgender talking points, which also went viral when it was posted by itself. As of this writing, that segment on YouTube showed 13,704 Thumbs Up to 1,182 Thumbs Down.

And who makes up the majority of Shapiro’s audience? When I emailed him that question a few days ago, he wrote back, “The majority of our audience is under age 35.”

What do you know!

And what about people like Lila Rose, leader of Live Action, and one of a growing army of young, pro-life activists?

Rose is just 29 herself, but she has been an unstoppable force of godly opposition to the Goliath called Planned Parenthood. The momentum of her movement is increasing, not decreasing. In fact, many young pro-lifers believe that their generation is more opposed to abortion than their parents' generation.

If the tide could shift here, why not in other cultural areas as well? At the least, the alleged inevitable, national embrace of abortion that we were told to expect years ago has not materialized.

Roe v. Wade settled nothing. Instead, it became the rallying point of the pro-life movement, which is still pushing back more than four decades later. Could the same thing happen one day with Obergefell vs. Hodges?

Other young voices, like the popular blogger Matt Walsh, or the radio sensation Steven Crowder, or groups like Campus Reform, all point in the same direction: Lots of young people are not going along with today's PC narrative, and that means that the future is not as fixed as our friends on the left would suggest.

And let's not forget the voice of young conservative scholars like 35-year-old Ryan T. Anderson, refuting leftist arguments with academic acumen and grace.

I'm 62 years old, clearly part of the older, supposedly more bigoted generation. But my single largest audience on social media is in the 25-34 year-old bracket. In fact, on our page Facebook, we have slightly more followers aged 18-24 than aged 55-64. Not surprisingly, wherever I go to speak, young people, many in their teens, thank me for taking a stand and being their voice.

Let's also not forget about conservative schools like Liberty

University, currently with a student body of 110,000, roughly 15,000 on campus and 95,000 online. A professor there told me that Liberty is now producing half of all military chaplains. What does this say about the future?

And as secular universities lurch farther and farther to the left, how many parents and teens will seek out other schools of higher learning?

There's also a spiritual factor that greatly encourages me, as the large majority of Christians devoted to day and night prayer for America are young people. Surely this is another good sign. Perhaps God has something to say about our future as well

Again, I know how the polls look, and I know how dramatically our nation has shifted, especially in terms of the consistent, far-left message put out so much of the media.

But the rising tide of young conservative voices cannot be denied, and I assure you that they will not be silenced.