

Is the Collapse of Our Secular Universities Imminent?

Are our secular universities, especially those leaning most radically left, soon to collapse—or at least, soon to lose their current positions of power and influence? A good case can be made that the answer could well be yes.

First, there has been a serious dip in enrollment in our colleges and universities across the nation. As noted in a March 9, 2023 headline on the Fortune website, “The labor shortage is pushing American colleges into crisis, with the plunge in enrollment the worst ever recorded.”

Yes, “What first looked like a pandemic blip has turned into a crisis. Nationwide, undergraduate college enrollment dropped 8% from 2019 to 2022, with declines even after returning to in-person classes, according to data from the National Student Clearinghouse. The slide in the college-going rate since 2018 is the steepest on record, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“Economists say the impact could be dire.”

Already in May 2022, US News reported that, “College Enrollment Declines Are Here to Stay. The enrollment data comes as a growing number of students consider alternatives to higher education – both as a result of tuition costs and data highlighting earnings potential without a degree.”

Is a college degree really that important for life and success, especially in light of today’s sky-high tuitions?

Second, declining birth rates are contributing to the lower enrollments. As the Hechinger Report explained, “focusing only

on the effects of COVID on enrollment obscures that a demographic downturn has already been squeezing colleges and universities for a decade during which the number of students has declined by an unprecedented 2.6 million, or 13%.

“Because of a falloff in the number of births during the last recession, another drop of from 11 to 15% is projected beginning in the mid-2020s in the number of prospective college students graduating from high schools.”

But it is here that a separation could be coming, as Christian conservatives have more children than do liberals and the non-religious.

As a July 2021 headline in the Western Journal announced, “Birth Rates Are the Right’s Secret Weapon as Liberal Values Backfire.”

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The article by Miska Salemann stated that, “Data from the General Social Survey indicates that in the 1970s ‘there was little or no difference in fertility rates between liberal and conservative women,’ according to the Institute for Family Studies.”

Over time, though, that statistic has changed dramatically, and Salemann reports, “As of 2018, the gap had widened markedly, with conservative women between the ages of 30-44 averaging near 2.5 children and liberal women just over 1.5.” She continues, “To approach the data another way, the survey also shows that a random sample of 100 conservative adults will raise 208 children. One hundred liberal adults will raise only 147 kids, according to Fatherly.”

And what does this mean in practical terms? “That gap means that conservatives could hold a political edge, as the size of

liberal families continues to dwindle. The evidence that supports this idea is overwhelming," and it is only logical to assume that it will affect college enrollments too.

It is true, of course, that not all of these children of Christian conservatives will go to Christian schools, and it is also true that there has been a problem of retention. (In other words, a sizable minority of these young people will leave the faith.) But the more extreme the secular universities become, the more likely it is that they will lose more and more Christian conservatives.

Take Harvard University as a case in point. Its prestige and influence are hard to exaggerate. Yet in a recent report, Harvard was rated as *the worst* school in the nation when it came to free speech. The worst!

But that's only the beginning of the story. According to the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), Harvard scored a zero out of 100 possible points, with the next worst school scoring at 11 out of 100. In fact, according to FIRE, Harvard's score of " is generous" because its "actual score is ." So, on a scale of 1 to 100, Harvard scored a *minus* .

Will Harvard, along with other hyper-woke schools, continue to draw students into such an oppressive atmosphere? Perhaps at a certain point the risk will outweigh the reward.

And how long will Christian parents continue to send their kids to these elite schools where their faith will come under constant attack?

Third, the more these schools embrace radical Marxism, the less students will receive a practical education and the less equipped they will be for the real world. (If you have any doubt about the Marxist ideological takeover of many of our schools, see Christopher Rufo's *America's Cultural Revolution: How the Radical Left Conquered Everything.*)

✖ The Fortune article referenced, “hundreds of thousands of young people who came of age during the pandemic but didn’t go to college. Many have turned to hourly jobs or careers that don’t require a degree, while others have been deterred by high tuition and the prospect of student debt.” Add to this the simple fact that Marxism doesn’t work and you have a further recipe for disaster.

Contrast this with a February 7, 2023 article in the Daily Caller that stated, “Christian colleges and universities are seeing an increase in enrollment despite the national enrollment rate of college students being on a decline, higher education experts told the Daily Caller News Foundation.

“The national undergraduate enrollment rate dropped 1.1% during the fall 2022 semester while the rate declined a total of 4.2% since 2020, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Many faith-based institutions, however, saw an increase in enrollment which higher education experts claim is because of these institutions’ commitment to their roots.”

Could a major shift be underway? {eo}

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