

Professor Makes Shocking Discovery While Measuring Anti-Christian and Political Bias in Academia

Perhaps the greatest irony of our age is that colleges and universities—the very institutions that are intended to educate and intellectually challenge the masses—oft-times foster environments that are routinely accused of being patently one-sided and biased.

After all, college is intended to be an intensive time of self-exploration—one in which young people are theoretically opened up to the world around them, with diverse perspectives and experiences helping to shape their contextual understandings. Yet, in contrast, higher education today is often a breeding ground for exclusively progressive ideals and values that are masqueraded, paraded and marketed to young minds as definitive, unadulterated truth, as I extensively document in my new book, *Fault Line: How a Seismic Shift in Culture Is Threatening Free Speech and Shaping the Next Generation*.

Unfortunately, young people are all too often fed this information from left-of-center professors, who are injecting their worldview into the classroom with little regard for the need for divergent beliefs in the educational marketplace. Their ideals, presented as truth and many times so filtered that opposing views are either denigrated into silence or ignored entirely, are often pervasive and treated as gospel when in fact they're nothing more than mere personal opinion.

Don't get me wrong. There is absolutely nothing wrong with liberal professors being employed by colleges and

universities; what is improper, however, is an environment in which young people are given an imbalanced perspective on key social, political and international issues or one in which conservative professors are too afraid to share their views with colleagues for fear of reprisal.

Such imbalances create unaccommodating and uncomfortable environments for those who do not share left-of-center perspectives, though the more pervasive and concerning issue is the notion that young, impressionable minds are potentially robbed of the ability to make decisions for themselves, especially when they aren't presented with a fair assessment of all the available and pertinent information.

Measuring Bias

The problem with measuring bias in the classroom, of course, is the fact that so much of what is claimed to have happened is based on anecdotal examples, though such incidents certainly warrant attention and analysis. That said—in addition to statistics that prove that liberal professors far outpace conservative ones—there have been some successful methods used to measure academic bias.

In fact, University of North Texas professor George Yancey has been more than vocal about the overt bias that he sees inherent in university environments, diving deep into that paradigm in an interview for *Fault Line*.

On a broader level, Yancey rejected the claims of some in society who argue that, as a nominal majority, Christians can't possibly be the victims of discrimination, saying that he has conducted research that proves that these individuals are flat wrong in advancing such contentions.

"I always preface this by saying, 'I'm not saying that Christians are black. We're not talking about Jim Crow,'" he told me. "There's something to the fact that, at least in the past, Christians have been the majority—and maybe they still

are in many ways today—but my research shows that if you are a conservative Protestant, you have a distinctive disadvantage going for a job in academia.”

Yancey’s research involved a survey based on a national sample in which he presented professors with 26 potential characteristics and asked how they would react if they found out that a job candidate possessed each descriptor or characteristic. His question essentially asked, “If you found this out about a person, would it make you more or less likely to hire them?”

In the end, the professor said it became more than clear that the academics surveyed were “definitely less likely” to hire Christian fundamentalists and evangelicals—characteristics that garnered the most negative reactions, even outpacing conservative political persuasions.

“They were less willing to hire Republicans, for example, but that measure was at a much lower rate,” Yancey explained. “That’s why I say conservative Protestants are the ones that academics themselves will tell you, ‘Yes, I’m less likely to hire you if I find out that you’re a conservative Protestant.’” Half of them share this sentiment, as Yancey said. “About half. Obviously not all of them, but about half of them.”

Dire Situation

It is those findings that lead Yancey to see roadblocks in academia for those who embrace conservatism and Protestantism, with the professor saying that other research conducted on the matter backs his theories. While some might scoff, Yancey offered up a powerful comparison to showcase the dire nature of the situation.

“If we had that sort of data on any other group—if we had that sort of data on Jews, that almost half of all academics are less likely to hire you if you’re Jewish, no one would argue

that anti-Semitism is not costing Jews in the academic world," he continued. "Really, there's no real argument that anti-Christian bias is not costing at least conservative Protestants in the academia world."

In the end, Yancey said he was surprised by the results. He went into the survey assuming that he would uncover bias, though he initially predicted that it would be more prevalent on political indicators rather than religious. Clearly, he was wrong.

With the aforementioned information in mind, it's easy to see how Christianity, God, and conservative values have been marginalized—and hold the potential to continue to be marginalized—in today's university system.

What Kind of Citizens Do We Want?

At the core of the discussion is an important question, though: If we truly want to raise freethinking citizens who are able to discern and make important life decisions, isn't it essential that they have all of the available options before them so that they can make the most appropriate and reasonable choices?

This shouldn't be a radical idea; in fact, it is one that many individuals—both liberal and conservative—have cited. Consider what progressive New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof wrote about this very issue in a May 2016 op-ed. To summarize, Kristof concluded that universities disregard "ideological and religious" diversity. Speaking of the ramifications for such a dynamic, he wrote, "The stakes involve not just fairness to conservatives or evangelical Christians ... but also the quality of education itself."

Kristof pointed to a number of other important values, including the need for liberals to remain open and, thus, "true to their own values." Additionally, he said a dearth in representation of conservatives and evangelicals negatively

impacts the quality of education. With some perspectives not being present at the table, he warned classrooms can become echo chambers and that, in the end, everyone loses as a result.

The columnist went on to cite studies that he said showed clear disparities in professors' ideological viewpoints, saying that some inquiries have found that just 6-11 percent of humanities professors self-identify as Republican, with just 7-9 percent saying the same in the social sciences. In that latter group, around 18 percent have called themselves Marxists—a fact that led Kristof to conclude that “it’s easier to find a Marxist in some disciplines than a Republican.”

He also offered up a challenge to his fellow liberals: “Maybe we progressives could take a brief break from attacking the other side and more broadly incorporate values that we supposedly cherish—like diversity—in our own dominions.”

The only question now is: Will they heed that advice? {eo}

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