

School Choice Can Turn the Tide of the 'Culture Massacre'

The Spectator Australia published an article Monday claiming that the “culture war” between conservative and liberal values is, in reality, a “cultural massacre.” The carnage is evident in the numbers, specifically in education: in the United Kingdom, conservatives make up only seven percent of primary school teachers and only eight percent of secondary school teachers.

In the United States, conservatives often focus on the lack of intellectual diversity on university campuses. They are not wrong to worry. In September, the *Econ Journal Watch* published a study of 7,243 professors at 40 leading universities. Their research shows that Democrats outnumber Republicans by nearly a twelve to one ratio. The history department is the most biased: for every one conservative professor there are 33.5 liberal professors.

However, this recent U.K. article should make us question whether conservatives are looking at the wrong battlefield altogether.

Indoctrination begins, like it has before, with the youth.

Verdant Labs recently published a comprehensive chart on the political makeup of various occupations. The study shows that 85 percent of elementary school teachers and 87 percent of high school teachers identify as Democrat. Recent stories, such as anti-Trump questions on quizzes, show how such numbers can affect the intellectual environment in the classroom.

Perhaps this should not surprise us, but it should concern us. As *The College Fix* put it recently:

It's no surprise that a system that is state-funded and state-run advocates for a bigger government ... Education is the cornerstone of Western society, a place where our youth are taught to think broadly and develop their own unique worldview. Instead, we are often taught what to believe instead of how to think.

Students seem the least prepared to think critically in history, the subject in which bias dominates the most at the collegiate level. An article in *The American Conservative* reveals alarming numbers: only 21 out of 50 states assess their students' proficiency in history, and less than 20 percent of U.S. high school students were proficient in American history as shown in the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress Report. Furthermore, Dennis Prager points out that certain subjects, like communism, are neglected in public schools because teachers can choose their own curriculum. As a result, by the time students enter college, their historical literacy is so weak that they will likely not even notice the bias they face.

The Spectator Australia urges us to recognize the bias present in our own primary and secondary education, but it also points to a possible solution: more parent involvement. The U.K. article suggests that if a national curriculum is to be developed, "it must be parents, not 'expert advisory groups' responsible for its formation." Furthermore, it calls for a resurgence of homeschooling and community groups as a means to educate youth, and points to the necessity of vouchers to do so.

Indoctrination of the youth also will end like it has in the past: with a return to the family. Only then can education truly help students to develop a broad worldview consistent with the truth of what it means to be human and how we ought to flourish.

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