

The End of Freedom on College Campuses

From chapter 2 (“The Campus Thought Police”) from Dr. Michael L. Brown’s book, *The Silencing of the Lambs*.

It is difficult to describe how far our college and university campuses have lurched to the left in recent decades. Suffice it to say that, “According to a recent [2018] study on faculty party affiliation by the National Association of Scholars, the ratio of Democrats to Republicans at Williams College is 132:1; at Swarthmore it is 120:1; and at Bryn Mawr it is 72:0. At many of America’s best research universities, the ratios are only moderately better.”¹ For good reason, the 2018 article citing this study was titled, “The Disappearing Conservative Professor.” How did this happen right in front of our eyes?

In 2020, a report that focused on Harvard University found the same situation prevailing on that iconic campus: “A recent survey by the Harvard Crimson found that conservatives make up just over 1% of the school’s faculty.”² Chew on that one for a moment. The implications are massive.

Your child has the honor of being accepted to Harvard University, one of the most respected schools of higher learning on the planet. One day she (or he) will be a Harvard grad! But at what cost to your child’s soul? To what degree will Christian students at Harvard unlearn the values and beliefs their parents have instilled in them? To what extent will they be indoctrinated into a godless (or anti-God) worldview?

After all, college and university students look up to their professors, who, in their eyes, are so brilliant and enlightened. Surely, these learned teachers must be right. And

so, the instructors become the new role models (and almost surrogate parents) for your children. As a result, many of these kids, now young adults, will fall away. (According to Campus Renewal, 60-80 percent of professing Christian students “become disengaged with their faith” during their first year in college. Another factor, of course, is the party-filled, anything-goes atmosphere on many campuses.)³

Yet it is to Harvard (and similar schools) our children must go, even though the faculty will be stacked against their beliefs by as much as 100 to 1. Think about that. And think about the tens of thousands of other students from all kinds of backgrounds who will graduate from Harvard with their own worldviews shifted strongly to the left.

More than ten years ago, I was meeting with some Christian leaders in New York City, including some Christian educators. One of them, a woman who was now teaching at Queens College (where I earned my bachelor’s degree) shared an eye-opening personal story.

Upon receiving her PhD, she was hired as a faculty member at Queens, excited for this new opportunity God had given her.

The first week of the fall semester, she met with the faculty members from her own department as they reviewed their experiences from the previous school year. To her shock, the professors boasted about how many students they had “deconverted.” One said, “I managed to persuade ten of my students to abandon their faith.” Another replied, “I got eleven!” She was absolutely mortified.

When Progressive Really Means Oppressive

But our campuses have not only lurched far to the left. They have become increasingly oppressive in the process, as viewpoints that oppose the prevailing leftist ideology are actively suppressed—by the faculty, by the administration, or by fellow students. Cancel culture is having a field day in

our institutions of higher learning.

I received a call on my radio show about ten years ago from a professor at a college in Virginia. She explained to me that she, a committed Christian, was not allowed to say the word God in her classroom unless it related directly to the subject matter of her lecture. On the other hand, she was fully aware of other faculty members who regularly derided the concept of God in their classrooms, even though they were teaching on totally unrelated subjects. Bashing the Bible and the God of the Bible were just fine. Speaking about God (or the Bible) in a positive way was out of line. She assured me she had her facts right. Fail to conform, and you're out.

Campus Reform reported in August 2020 that an English professor at Iowa State University threatened to expel students who advocated "against abortion or the Black Lives Matter movement in any of their writing assignments." A screenshot of the professor's syllabus said this, in bold print: "GIANT WARNING: any instances of othering that you participate in intentionally (racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, sorophobia, transphobia, classism, mocking of mental health issues, body shaming, etc) in class are grounds for dismissal from the classroom." And she made her intentions totally clear, saying, "You cannot choose any topic that takes at its base that one side doesn't deserve the same basic human rights as you do (ie: no arguments against gay marriage, abortion, Black Lives Matter, etc). I take this seriously."⁴

Cross this line and dare to differ with the professor's radical leftist ideology, and you are out. Dare to stand up for the lives of the unborn or question any of the BLM agenda, and you are gone. Dismissed. Expelled. Canceled!

But this is not something new, nor does it represent an isolated case. Already in 2011 in my book *A Queer Thing Happened to America*, I documented cases of Christian administrators, professors, and students who had lost their

jobs on campus or been expelled from their programs simply because they differed with LGBTQ talking points. In one case, it was a respected administrator who penned an op-ed for her local newspaper on her own time, taking issue with a local gay activist, based on her understanding of the Bible. For that, she was fired. In another case, it was a Catholic professor teaching on Catholic beliefs in a religion class in his university. For that, his class was dropped—and him with it. In still another case, it was a pastor's wife, studying counseling in graduate school, who was bounced out for adhering to her own conscience. For that, she was expelled from the counseling program, ultimately leading to two court cases, the first one standing with the university and the second standing with her. What a battle for simply being a Christian on campus.⁵

Again in 2020, the Washington Times documented how “a vocal minority has summoned the spirit of collective control over what can be thought and said” at many colleges and universities. These schools have “helped to shut down debate in the classroom. They have also chilled research and discouraged professors from presenting dissenting ideas to the general public. A blanket of ideological conformity now covers most campuses.”⁶ As the old proverb goes, “The tallest blade of grass is the first to be cut by the scythe.” Better to conform and save your career than to stand out and be cut down.

When Christian Groups Are Targeted

Ultimately, there is one group in particular that has been singled out on college campuses: Christian conservatives—to the point of schools banning their organizations from campus. I documented this already in *A Queer Thing Happened to America* (meaning as early as 2011), citing examples from the years before that, and it continues to happen to this day. In fact, when that book was released, I sent word to Christian friends in different states who had strong connections to local campus

ministries, offering to have a respectful and civil debate with a qualified representative on any topic in my book. What were the results? In state after state I was told, “Not a chance. There’s no way the campus ministries will host something like that. It’s way too controversial and could threaten their standing with the school. In fact, some of them told us that if we tried to bring the event to the campus, they would oppose it.”

Yes, some campus ministries actually threatened to oppose me engaging in a public debate (or even delivering a lecture) on a subject such as, “The Bible and Homosexual Practice” or, “Should Same-Sex Marriage Be Legal?” Some of these campus leaders were concerned that my presence would disrupt the good relationships they were building with the LGBTQ community, not realizing that my style of presentation would actually build bridges, not burn them. But others admitted that they were concerned that they would be banned from campus if they hosted me. That was a risk they were not willing to take.

But all hope is not lost. Not by a long shot. As the Daily Signal reported in October, 2019, “In a significant win for religious liberty, a federal court last month ruled that a state university in Iowa can’t require a Christian student organization to have non-Christian leaders.”

Plenty of Christian campuses (and ministries) have not caved, while others are pushing back. So on with the godly resistance. With hearts of compassion and backbones of steel, with the Word of truth and the Spirit’s empowerment, we cannot be defeated.

For more information on The Silencing of the Lambs, visit [.](#)

Notes:

Jon A. Shields, “The Disappearing Conservative Professor,” National Affairs, Fall 2018, [.](#) See the complete data from the study here: Mitchell Langbert, “Homogenous: The Political

Affiliations of Elite Liberal Arts College Faculty,” Academic Questions 31 (2018): table 1,

2 John Gage, “Harvard Newspaper Survey Finds 1% of Faculty Members Identify as Conservative,” Washington Examiner, March 4, 2020, For an individual professor’s perspective, see Jerry Bergman, “Ratio of Liberal to Conservative Professors Has Profoundly Changed,” KPC News, October 10, 2019,

3 Paul McCants, “Campus Ministry Link: Connecting Youth to College Ministries,” Campus Renewal, September 2016,

4 Jessica Custodio, “Prof Threatens to Punish Students for Pro-life, Anti-BLM Views,” Campus Reform, August 18, 2020, For the record, I had to look up sorophobia too. My spell checker didn’t recognize it either. I learned that the word is actually sororophobia, and it “designates the complex and shifting relations between women’s attempts to identify with other women and their often simultaneous desire to establish and retain difference.” But of course. “Description,” Sororophobia: Differences Among Women in Literature and Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), #.X9_GT9hKiF4.

5 Michael L. Brown, A Queer Thing Happened to America: And What a Long, Strange Trip It’s Been (Concord, NC: EqualTime Books, 2011), 495–546.

6 Peter Wood and Pete Peterson, “Thought Control and Cancel Culture Overtakes Colleges and Universities,” Washington Times, August 10, 2020, {eoa}

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