

The Exponential Growth of Hostility Toward Conservative Christians in America

George Yancey (Ph.D., University of Texas) is professor of sociology at Baylor University and the author of a number of books on racial reconciliation, as well as books on the increasingly hostile, anti-Christian environment in America, especially in academia. And he is a fair-minded scholar, basing his views on hard data and not afraid to criticize his own, evangelical side. Yet he too is sounding the alarm, with one volume actually titled, *So Many Christians, So Few Lions: Is There Christianophobia in the United States?* (He defines Christianophobia as “an unreasonable hatred toward conservative Christians”—and he wrote this in 2014.)

Prof. Yancey began his 2015 book, *Hostile Environment: Understanding and Responding to Anti-Christian Bias*, with a striking personal illustration. He wrote:

I remember vividly a disturbing conversation that I once had with a good Christian friend who taught in a high school. He told me that he mentioned one day in class that some Christians around the world were being killed for their faith. To his amazement, some students approved of these murders. In their minds, it was time for Christians to face the same death that Christians had inflicted on others.

I was struck by the ahistorical nature of this line of thought. Although Christians in the United States do not face jail or death for their faith, there is a long history of Christians around the world being punished for their faith. I also wondered how so much hatred had developed against Christians. This conversation took place almost two decades ago, and I see little evidence that this type of hatred has

abated.

In fact, my recent research has confirmed that such hatred is still very powerful. David Williamson and I conducted a survey of culturally progressive activists using open-ended questions. The survey questions elicited a variety of hostile statements aimed at conservative Christians. One statement in particular (from a male, age 36-45) caught my attention: 'The only good Christian is a dead Christian.'

In short, "when one is in a war, one should offer no mercy to the enemy. The respondent made it clear that he sees Christians as the enemy and believes that no mercy should be given to them."

Other respondents had comments like this:

"The only difference I see between [a] Christian fundamentalist and [an] Islamic fundamentalist is terrorism. At their heart both movements are attempts to replace their country's government with theocracies. Religion in the political arena is dangerous to freedom and should be not allowed. Even minor intrusions such as allowing religious groups to distribute public funds to the poor should not be allowed" (male, age 46–55).

"The Christian Right's influence in our government is as dangerous as the Taliban in Afghanistan or the ayatollahs in Iran. We cannot allow them to get a solid foothold in our government. The only way to do this without infringing on rights is to be especially vigilant and point out their bigotry and hypocrisy often and loudly so as to discredit them in the eyes of their followers and, more importantly, the eyes of the voting populace" (female, age 66–75).

As Yancey explains, in many cases, what lies behind this hatred is the fear that Christian conservatives want to take over the country and impose their values on it, from outlawing

abortion to discriminating against gays. And so, whatever we say or do is part of that not-so-secret plot. (Remember that he has been sounding this alarm for years now.)

Yancey writes, "For example, a female age 56–65 stated that 'it's pretty troubling to me what they're doing, how sneaky they are, how they project their negativity onto others, mostly how they are trying to ... and succeeding ... take over our public education system.' Another female age 66–75 stated that Christians are 'dangerous—attending law school so they can infiltrate government and take over our country.'"

From our perspective, of course, we are trying to save the lives of babies and to preserve God's order for the family, which we are convinced is also in the best interest of our country. We are simply pushing back against the increasing radicalism of our society, noting that abortion was illegal in most of America until 1973 and that same-sex "marriage" was not recognized until 2015.

We also believe that the vision of our Founding Fathers has been violated, and we are simply fighting for what is right—even more, these days, we are simply fighting for our rights, since the so-called "progressives" would like nothing more than to silence us in the public square and take away our rights. "Stay out of the schools, stay out of the media, stay out of politics—just stay out of our way. That's why you have churches. Go and worship your God there."

This is the silencing of the lambs. {eoa}

*The preceding is an excerpt from **Dr. Michael Brown's** book The Silencing of the Lambs (Charisma House, 2022). For more information, or to order the book, please visit .*

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