

# THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN: MAKING GAY OKAY

- I. EPISTEMOLOGICAL NOMINALISM**—calling “evil good and good evil,” putting “darkness for light . . . bitter for sweet” (Is 5:20); exchanging “the truth of God for the lie” (Ro 1:25), so that “even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting” (Ro 1:28).
- A. Medieval clash: Nominalism dislodges Realism; Richard Weaver: “The defeat of logical realism in the great medieval debate was the crucial event in the history of Western culture; from this flowed those acts which issue now in modern decadence” (*Ideas Have Consequences*, p. 3). C.S. Lewis: “For the wise men of old the cardinal problem had been how to conform the soul to reality, and the solution had been knowledge, self-discipline, and virtue. For magic and applied science alike the problem is how to subdue reality to the wishes of men . . .” (*Abolition of Man*, p. 88). Confucius: “When words leave their meaning, people lose their liberty.”
- B. Subjectivism installed—reality is what I label it, subjecting truth to my desire
1. Orwell’s “Newspeak”—“War Is Peace, Freedom is Slavery;” effective propaganda inculcates opinions/beliefs
  2. Current illustrations:
    - a. Feminists’ “Gender” replaces “sex;” “chair” replaces “chairman;” “their” replaces pronoun “his”
    - b. One man demanded he be able to nurse baby (male/female distinction arbitrary!), has tube surgically implanted to enable him to transfer milk from container through nipple!
    - c. Rachel Dolezal: “I identify as black” (though genetically white)
- C. Accordingly: “same-sex marriage” detached from biological reality, i.e. “conjugal union”
- II. ETHICAL HEDONISM**—“let us eat, drink, and be merry” (Lk 15:23); “if it feels good, do it;” (cf. Romans 1:26-32)
- A. Epicurean influence, mounting since Renaissance (c.f. Benjamin Wiker’s *Moral Darwinism*); Utilitarian “pleasure calculus” influential since 19<sup>th</sup> century
- B. Rationalizing Lust, *a la* Freud (“pleasure principle” & Kinsey (c.f. Michael Jones’ *Degenerate Moderns; Dionysius Rising; Libido Dominandi*)
- C. *Sensate Culture*, 600 years in the making—thus, re modern art: “At its overripe stage, prostitutes, criminals, street urchins, the insane, hypocrites, rogues, and other subsocial types are its favorite ‘heroes.’ Its aim is to afford a refined sensual enjoyment: relaxation, excitation of tired nerves, amusement, pleasure, entertainment” (Pitrim Sorokin, *The Crisis of Our Age*, p. 32).
- D. Sexual Revolution (orchestrated by ‘60s generation) mainstreams “pleasure principle”
- E. Sodomy (demonstrably promiscuous) self-serving, passing pleasure-focused
- III. THEOLOGICAL LIBERALISM**—“life, not doctrine” since doctrine=personal opinion; “empirical science & personal experience trump revelation;” singularly focused on “love”—rejected by John Henry Newman as: “the languid, unmeaning benevolence which we misname Christian love”
- A. Shifting societal standards set agenda—Christians adapt & adjust
- B. “Mainline” churches’ teachings reflect secular surroundings (thus shifting to societal standards)
1. Denominations’ adjustments—e.g. Presbyterians struggle re ordination (akin to Methodists’ struggles re “holy abortion” and affirming liturgies)
  2. Fallacious/fraudulent scholarship disseminated by compliant media

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- a. Spurious “gay gene”
  - b. John Boswell’s skewed findings re Church history
  - c. Dubious biblical “exegesis” explaining away clear biblical mandates
  - d. “Evangelical” proponents—Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Letha Scanzoni, Tony Campollo (Bill Clinton’s spiritual advisor)
3. Contrast Martin Luther: “The heinous conduct of the people of Sodom is extraordinary, inasmuch as they departed from the natural passion and longing of the male for the female, which was implanted by God, and desired what is altogether contrary to nature. Whence comes this perversity: Undoubtedly from Satan, who, after people have once turned away from the fear of God, so powerfully suppresses nature that he beats out the natural desire and stirs up a desire that is contrary to nature”) with Peggy Campollo, who thinks that “Romans 1 does not apply to monogamous, ‘loving,’ homosexual relationships, and evangelicals who feel differently than her are ‘grossly misinformed’
- C. Rejecting God’s precepts, gay rights devotees act out rebellion against Him

### IV. LEGAL POSITIVISM—judges (or legislators) issue edicts

- A. Natural Law Tradition (“judge righteously, Dt 1:16) basic to Christian ethics (cf. Aquinas, Blackstone et al)
- B. Current courts:
  1. Following Oliver Wendell Holmes—embodied “progressive” view of: “law without values;” of moral beliefs “more or less arbitrary. . . . Do you like sugar in your coffee or don’t you? . . . So as to truth.”
  2. Decried by:
    - a. Robert Bork “There is no logical or constitutional foundation for the majority’s decision in *Romer v. Evans*. The decision is an unsupported victory for homosexual activists, with whom the Court evidently sympathizes” (*Slouching Toward Gomorra*, p. 114).
    - b. Antonin Scalia: “Day by day, case by case, [the Supreme Court] is busy designing a Constitution for a country I do not recognize.” “This practice of constitutional revision by an unelected committee of nine . . . robs the people of the most important liberty they asserted in the Declaration of Independence . . . the freedom to govern themselves.”
- C. Consequent chaos—e.g. Roe, Casey, Romer, *et al.*—justifying abortion, sodomy *etc.*

### V. POLITICAL PROGRESSIVISM—humanly-orchestrated, utopian ideologies (thus Tom Hayden celebrated man’s “unfulfilled capacities” & Hillary Clinton promoted “making what appears to be impossible, possible . . . . We’re not interested in social reconstruction; it’s human reconstruction.” Barack Obama promised to “fundamentally transform” this nation as well as arrest the rising ocean levels

- A. Jacobins, Bolsheviks, Progressives all seek “change” to perfect both man & society
  1. Liberty—autonomous individualism; “my rights” trump all
  2. Equality—abolish distinctions, hierarchies; thus “marriage equality”
  3. Fraternity—humanitarianism (“citizens” and “comrades”); Man replaces God;
  4. Rousseau’s “General Will” & Bolshevik’s Proletariat & Progressives’ elites supreme—rulers make up rules—consequently florists & bakers & pizza shop owners punished
- B. Democrats (2000 Convention) boo Boy Scouts & reject “God” (2012 platform), led by Bill Clinton (pro-Gay initiatives while President) & “evolving” Barack Obama

# THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN

Fifty years ago Bob Dylan sang “the times they are a changing,” and indeed they were. But our times are not so much changing as confusing! So Melanie Phillips, an eminent and learned English journalist, says: “It is as if one has wandered onto the set of a Bunuel movie scripted by Kafka. Nothing is really as it is said to be. Society seems to be in the grip of a mass derangement” (p. x). Phillips details and seeks to understand her bewilderment in *The World Turned Upside Down: The Global Battle over God, Truth, and Power*, a probing analysis of significant phenomena that threaten the survival of our civilization. She writes as “a journalist who believes in telling truth to power and following the evidence. What I have concluded is that power has now hijacked truth and made it subservient to its own ends. The result is a world turned upside down” (p. xi). Two centuries of intellectual developments which can “be summed up as man first dethroning God in favor of reason, then dethroning reason in favor of man, and finally dethroning man himself. This was done by replacing objective knowledge with ideology, which grew out of the belief that man was all-powerful and could reshape the world in whatever image he chose” (p. 303).

This loss of rationality haunts Phillips. “The replacement of objective truth by subjective experience has turned some strands of science into a branch of unreason, as evidence is hijacked by ideology. The perceptive Anglican bishop Lesslie Newbigin grasped this fact back in the 1980s. In his essay *The Other Side of 1984*, he wrote, ‘I have started from the perception, which I believe to be valid and widely shared, that we are nearing the end of the period of 250 years during which our European culture has been confidently offering itself to the rest of the world as a torchbearer for human progress’” (p. 393). President Barack Obama provided “a startling example of this genuflection to the forces of irrationality and antimodernity” in his “speech of conciliation to the Muslim world in Cairo in June 2009.” He amplified the twisted Arabic rendition of the history of Palestine, “sanitized Islam and its history,” and “selectively and misleadingly quoted the *Qur’an* to present a passage that is a prescription for violence and murder against Jews and ‘unbelievers’ as instead a precept affirming the value of preserving human life; and he also claimed that Islam played a major role in the European Enlightenment” (p. 399).

Phillips’ treatise charts the unexpected parallels and shared perspectives of left-wing “progressives” such as Obama, Islamists, environmentalists, fascists, militant atheists and religious fanatics. “From manmade global warming to Israel, from Iraq to the origin of the universe, the West has replaced truth with ideology. Faced with an enemy that has declared war upon reason, the West has left the citadel undefended” (p. 406). All these movements are “united by the common desire to bring about through human agency the perfection of the world, an agenda which history teaches us leads invariably—and paradoxically—to tyranny, terror and crimes against humanity” (p. xiii). This pervasive utopian desire is, at heart, a repudiation not only of Western Civilization but of its Judeo-Christian roots. Its blatant irrationality betrays a deeper betrayal of the very civilization that birthed it. There thus exists a curious but powerful chain—the Red-Black-Green-Islamic Axis—that gives Phillips’ treatise its synthesizing persuasiveness. These very disparate movements share a deep commonality: all are utopians who seek to establish their “alternative reality” (p. 219).

To do so—to transform the world—Jews and Christians and their theological worldview must be marginalized if not banished. This requires replacing the Mosaic God and His moral standards with something better—an evolving Mother Earth or benevolent Nanny State or Islamic Sharia. Consequently: “In Britain and America, dominant ways of thinking have simply reversed the notions of right and wrong, normal and abnormal, victim and victimizer, truth and lies” (p. 289). Formerly immoral behaviors “such as sexual promiscuity or having children without a father, was treated as normal. Correspondingly, those who advocated mainstream, normative values such as fidelity, chastity or duty were accused of bigotry because they made those who did not uphold these values feel bad about themselves—now the ultimate sin. Alternative lifestyles became mainstream. The counterculture became the culture” (p. 286). Still more: “the tyrannical ideologies of the modern age . . . [have] forgotten that the reason upon which it prides itself and the science that flows from that reason owe their existence to religion” (p. 337).

To explore this transformation, Phillips begins with a brief and illuminating examination of “cults and conspiracies” which illustrate “an increasing tendency to live in a fantasy world where irrational beliefs in myths are thought to restore order to chaotic lives” (p. 6). Thus Barack Obama invoked messianic claims, saying his election signaled “the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal,” and Americans reacted by junking rationality altogether and elevating Obama not just to the presidency but to divinity” (p. 10).

## HOW LIBERALISM BECAME OUR STATE RELIGION

Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign and election clearly appealed to and elicited a strongly religious fervor. Devotees fainted at his rallies, messianic claims were attached to his agenda, and Obama promised a fundamental "transformation" of America. Celebrating his election, he grandiosely declared that peoples henceforth would see that "this was the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and the planet began to heal." Consequently, actor Jamie Foxx urged fans to "give an honor to God and our lord and savior Barack Obama." MSNBC commentator Chris Matthews enthused: "This is the New Testament" and "I feel this thrill going up my leg." Thus there is good reason to seriously ponder Benjamin Wiker's *Worshipping the State: How Liberalism Became Our State Religion*. He prefaces his treatise with a typically prescient statement by G. K. Chesterton: "It is only by believing in God that we can ever criticize the Government. Once abolish . . . God, and the Government becomes the God. That fact is written all across human history . . . The truth is that Irreligion is the opium of the people. Wherever the people do not believe in something beyond the world, they will worship the world. But, above all, they will worship the strongest thing in the world" (p. 1).

The religious aspect to today's secular liberalism stands revealed in its many anti-Christian endeavors—the "war on Christmas" with efforts to enshrine alternatives such as "Winter Solstice;" the cleansing from public school curricula any Christian content (while simultaneously promoting Islam); the dogmatic support of naturalistic evolution rather than any form of intelligent design in the universities; the removal of crosses or nativity scenes on public lands; the desecration of Christian symbols by "artists" of various sorts; the assault on Christian ethics through programs such as Obamacare, etc. Systematically imposed by the federal courts (following the crucial 1947 *Everson v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision), "the federal government has acted as an instrument of secularization, that is, of disestablishing Christianity from American culture, and establishing in its place a different worldview" (p. 11).

Lest we restrict this process to America, however, we must understand some powerful historical developments in Western Civilization that have been unfolding for half-a-millennium. To Wiker, the triumph of Liberalism in these centuries enabled growing numbers of folks to liberate themselves from the curse of Christianity, to replace the Church with an enlightened and nurturing state. Consequently, "Christians today find themselves in a largely secularized society" quite akin to the ancient world with an easy-going sexual ethos; "it is as if Christianity is being erased from history, and things were being turned back to the cultural status quo of two thousand years ago" (p. 37).

During the past 500 years we've witnessed "the rise of liberalism and the re-paganization of the state." Fundamental to this progression was Niccolo Machiavelli, who published *The Prince* in 1512 and "invented the absolute separation of church and state that is the hallmark of liberalism" (p. 104). Machiavelli's moral nihilism fit nicely with newly-empowered nation-states which followed the *cuius regio, eius religio* ("whose realm, his religion") to control the churches. Liberalism, consequently, insists the Church must accommodate the state, and to accomplish this, liberal thinkers during the Age of Reason determined to destroy the authority of Scripture; the "demotion of the Bible from revealed truth to mere myth is the result" (p. 58). Thus we are confronted, as H. Richard Niebuhr famously said, with theologians teaching that: "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross" (p. 153).

Having carefully explained the views of secular liberalism's architects, Wiker shows how Leftists of various sorts implemented it in the centuries following the French Revolution, for "as the first attempt to incarnate the new liberal political order in a great state, the French revolution is iconic for liberalism" (p. 200). Importantly, a purely naturalistic worldview must be crafted and imposed. We must be persuaded that "we live in a purposeless universe, so that each person has just as much right as anyone else to pursue his or her arbitrarily defined goals or ends" (p. 187). Each person freely fabricates and follows whatever moral standards he desire. In effect, this has led to a resurgence of a pagan ethos comfortable with such practices as abortion, euthanasia, promiscuity, sodomy and pedophilia.

To accomplish this, liberals determined to deprive the Christian religion of any real power. Most importantly, they seized control of the educational system, making it an agency of the state. To Wiker one "cannot overestimate" this development, for it precipitated "a top-down revolution wherein a relatively small minority may impose its worldview upon the entire population using state power. And the education establishment in our own country, as was the case in France, is dominated by radicals and socialists from the Left, from the universities right down to the elementary schools" (p. 216).

# MAKING GAY OKAY

Few societal changes have rivaled the rapidity with which homosexuality has been mainstreamed in America! When the nation's Supreme Court ruled in favor of "same-sex marriage," when Attorney General, Eric Holder, accused the Boy Scouts of bigotry for denying openly gay men positions as leaders in the organization, and when President Barack Obama issued edicts insuring special protections for homosexuals in companies granted contracts by the government, it became obvious that one of the most ancient moral standards had been breached. To grasp the nature and enormity of such decisions, Robert R. Reilly's *Making Gay Okay: How Rationalizing Homosexual Behavior Is Changing Everything* merits close attention. "The love whose name dare not be spoken (once upon a time) is being shouted, if not from the rooftops, at least from the streets in demonstrations and parades, from the platforms in political rallies, and from the pages of various popular and intellectual journals. And from the White House" (#91 in Kindle).

The great philosopher and Holocaust victim Edith Stein (in a declaration at the book's inception that discloses much of its message) said: "Do not accept anything as love which lacks truth." What's important when we address homosexual behavior is, above all, discerning truth regarding reality, for no one, as Plato said, wants to "lie in his soul about the most important things." Says Reilly: "My thesis is very simple. There are two fundamental views of reality. One is that things have a Nature that is teleologically ordered to ends that inhere in their essence and make them what they are. In other words, things have inbuilt purposes. The other is that things do not have a Nature with ends: things are nothing in themselves, but are only what we make them to be according to our wills and desires. Therefore, we can make everything, including ourselves, anything that we wish and that we have the power to do. The first view leads to the primacy of reason in human affairs; the second leads to the primacy of the will. The first does not allow for sodomitical marriage, while the second does. Indeed, the problem is that the second allows for anything. This is what the same-sex marriage debate is really about—the Nature of reality itself. Since the meaning of our lives is dependent upon the Nature of reality, it too hangs in the balance" (#47).

But denying the nature of things pervades the gay community and explains its many illogical rationalizations. Conscience-stricken homosexual activists think that by forcing everyone else to approve their behavior they will finally feel themselves righteous. As Aristotle rightly said: "Men start revolutionary changes for reasons connected with their private lives." Or, as Reilly says, "If you are going to center your public life on the private act of sodomy, you had better transform sodomy into a highly moral act." It must be more than tolerated—it must be approved, applauded, normalized. Anyone daring to disapprove must be publicly rebuked, chastised for hate speech, and punished. Gay rights activists persuade themselves that they are highly moral people intent on universalizing their morality. "Ironically," however, "the logic behind this process of legitimization of homosexual behavior undercuts any objective standards by which we could judge the moral legitimacy of anything" (#267). Severed from the Natural Law, gay apologists glide into an inescapably nihilistic maelstrom.

The Natural Law (as understood by the great architects of the Western Tradition such as Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine and Aquinas) prescribes correct behavior in accord with the given nature of things. There is a *Logos*, an understandable, ingrained purpose to all that is. Acting rightly means following right reason, moving toward a good goal, pursuing true happiness. With Aristotle, advocates of the Natural Law believe that "Nature ever seeks an end." Thus we live well by acting in accord with our design—thinking rationally, eating wisely, and nurturing the absolutely necessary *prepolitical* institution of the family, touted by Aristotle as the absolutely essential foundation for the state. That our genitals are not suited for sodomy, and that dire health consequences (far more deleterious than smoking tobacco or becoming obese) invariably accompany the same, cannot be denied. And yet precisely such truths are denied by homosexual activists. Reilly, however, leads his readers through a mass of details regarding the truly unnatural and harmful nature of homosexual activity. "One might say with Professor Harry Jaffa that 'nature itself seems to reward chastity with health, and punish promiscuity with disease. . . . It would certainly seem that nature has an interest in the morality that is conducive to the family, and punishes behavior inimical to it'" (#1201).

Contrary to assertions frequently made by gay activists, the greatest Greek philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle) considered homosexual behavior unnatural and thus immoral. "In the *Laws*, Plato's last book, the Athenian speaker says, 'I think that the pleasure is to be deemed natural which arises out of the intercourse between men and women; but that the intercourse of men with men, or of women with women, is contrary to nature, and that the bold attempt was originally due to unbridled lust'" (#449). "So what is sex for?" asks Reilly. "The end of sex . . . is to make 'one flesh'. Two becoming 'one flesh' encompasses

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both the generative and unitive Nature of sex. By Nature only men and women are physically capable of becoming ‘one flesh’. (Otherwise the pieces don’t fit.)” (#715).

During the past two centuries, however, this classical notion of man’s nature has been challenged by devotees of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who insisted that there is no given, essential human nature. He denied that man is a rational, political animal needing social structures. Lacking a *given* (i.e. divinely-designed) nature we are free to become whatever we desire to be. The solitary individual, the autonomous self, following his own designs, need not consider anything else. To live freely, we must shun social bonds such as marriage and follow our inner hungers. Thus the family, he declared, is an artificial thing that “can be changed and rearranged in any way the state or others may desire” (#597). Rousseau certainly wrote oft-and-eloquently about Virtue—as did his disciple Robespierre in the midst of the French Revolution’s Terror—but to him “virtue becomes *whatever* you choose. Virtue is not conforming your behavior to the rational ends of Nature, but conforming things to your desires. Reason becomes the instrument for doing this; it rationalizes for you” #610). As Reilly persuasively shows, gay-rights activists are, philosophically, followers of Rousseau, denying the Natural Law, inventing their own morality. And inasmuch as 20<sup>th</sup> century jurists have discarded the Natural Law, casting “aside millennia of moral teaching,” the gains made by homosexuals have been largely won through the courts.

And indeed the courts, whose decisions Reilly examines in depth, have acceded to the homosexual agenda. In the Supreme Court’s decision endorsing sodomy—*Lawrence v. Texas*—Justice Anthony Kennedy cited a passage from an earlier decision (*Casey*) defending abortion rights. At “the heart of liberty,” he intoned, is “the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life.” Following that prescription, Kennedy declared that “persons in a homosexual relationship may seek autonomy for these purposes, just as heterosexual persons do.” If one inserts persons in other kinds of relationships (e.g. polygamy, bestiality, adult incest) into Kennedy’s decision, the illogic of the Lawrence decision become instantly evident. If, however, the court actually meant that a homosexual is free to rationalize his “sodomitical behavior, even after a one-night stand, into something more pleasing and acceptable to your conscience—and you can not only do that but also seek to enforce your rationalization upon other people and the state of Texas by revoking their laws—then it all becomes clear” (#1662).

Following his careful examination of the rationalizing process basic to the justification of sodomy, Reilly persuasively details how it has successfully marched through our institutions. Psychiatrists, intimidated by militant gay activists, have redefined homosexuality, transforming what was once considered a perversion into an acceptable and inescapable orientation. Adoption agencies have been forced to equate same-sex and opposite-sex couples. Schools now normalize homosexual behavior, verbally pummeling students who dare condemn it. Inasmuch as educators significantly shape the thinking of a nation, they have been primary targets for homosexual activists, who have almost totally achieved their goals. Insisting we talk about “gender” (a construct) rather than “sex” (a biological given), demanding we use refer to “partners” rather than husbands and wives, homosexuals have successfully changed much of the language used in the schools. The Boy Scouts and the military have also suffered repeated attacks (what Reilly calls “the unremitting drum roll for allowing open homosexuality”) from the homosexual community. Gradually these institutions have shifted their positions, clearly normalizing same-sex activity.

“If life is sacred,” Reilly concludes, “then the means of generating it must also be sacred. If generation is intrinsic to the Nature of sex, then sex possesses immense significance. It is not a toy, or simply an amusement, or an item for sale. It is profoundly oriented to creation—creation emanating from union. It has a *telos*. As Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse said: ‘The human person is meant for love, and the human body cries out to be fruitful.’ As stated earlier, the fruit is the incarnation of the love. If generation is artificially separated from it, sex lapses into insignificance and triviality. This denial leads to its desecration and is contemptuous of what human beings are meant to be” (#3711).

*Making Gay Okay* is a solidly-researched, finely-reasoned treatise. Anyone concerned with the health of our culture and the direction of our nation should carefully consider its message.